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(1623-1662)



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The Collected Works of

BLAISE PASCAL



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Collected Works of Blaise Pascal



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The Books



Clermont-Ferrand, a city in the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region of central France — Pascal's birthplace



Cathedral Notre-Dame de l'Assumption, Clermont-Ferrand



Pascal was born in the crowded medieval centre of Clermont-Ferrand



A nineteenth century depiction of Pascal's birthplace, which no longer stands

Essay on Conics (1639)



Translated by Frances Marguerite Clarke

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“ESSAY POUR LES CONIQUES”



(Translated from the French by Dr. Frances Marguerite Clarke, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, Penna.)

WHEN PASCAL WAS only sixteen years old, he wrote a brief statement which was doubtless intended by him as the first step in an extended study of conics to be undertaken at some future time. In the following year it was printed in the form of a broadside and bore the simple title, “Essay pour les coniqves. Par B. P.” Of this single page only two copies are known, one at Hannover among the papers of LEIBNIZ, and the other in the Bibliothèque nationale at Paris. The illustrations here given appeared at the top of the original broadside. The third lemma involves essentially the “Mystic Hexagram” of Pascal. This translation first appeared in *Isis,* X, 33, with a facsimile of the entire essay, and is reproduced in revised form with the consent of the editors.

ESSAY ON CONICS



First Definition

When several straight lines meet at the same point, or are parallel to each other, all these lines are said to be of the same order or of the same *ordonnance*, and the totality of these lines is termed an order of lines, or an *ordonnance* of lines. [This definition is taken almost word for word from DESARGUES. See the notes to the BRUNSCHVICG and BOUTROUX edition, t. I., Paris, 1908. This translation is made from the facsimile of the original as given in this edition, and acknowledgment is hereby made of the assistance rendered by these notes in determining the meaning of several passages. It should also be said that the text of this edition is in marked contrast to the imperfect one given in the Paris edition of 1819.]

Definition II

By the expression "conic section," we mean the circle, ellipse, hyperbola, parabola, and an angle; since a cone cut parallel to its base, or through its vertex, or in the three other directions which produce respectively an ellipse, a hyperbola, and a parabola, produces in the conic surface, either the circumference of a circle, or an angle, or an ellipse, a hyperbola, or a parabola.

Definition III

By the word "droite" (straight) used alone, we mean "ligne droite" (straight line).

[In this translation, the word “line,” meaning a straight line-segment, will be used for “droite.”]

Lemma I

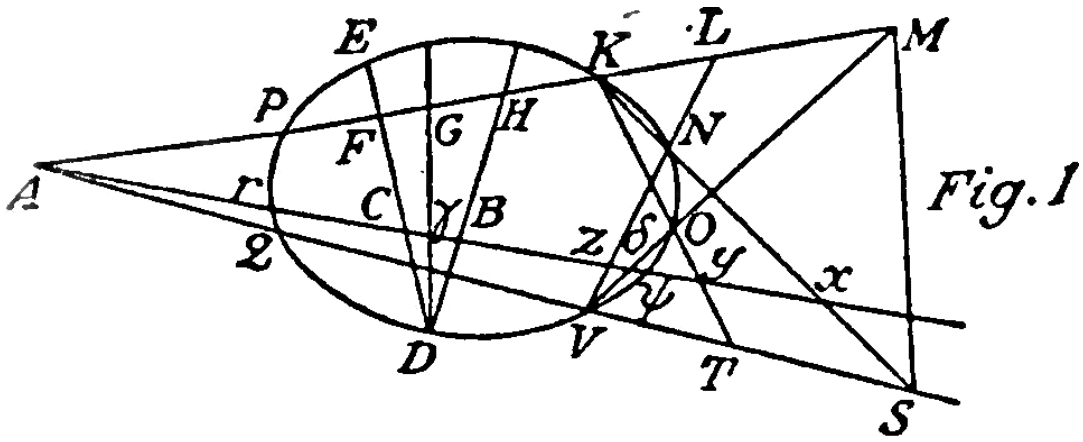


Fig. 1

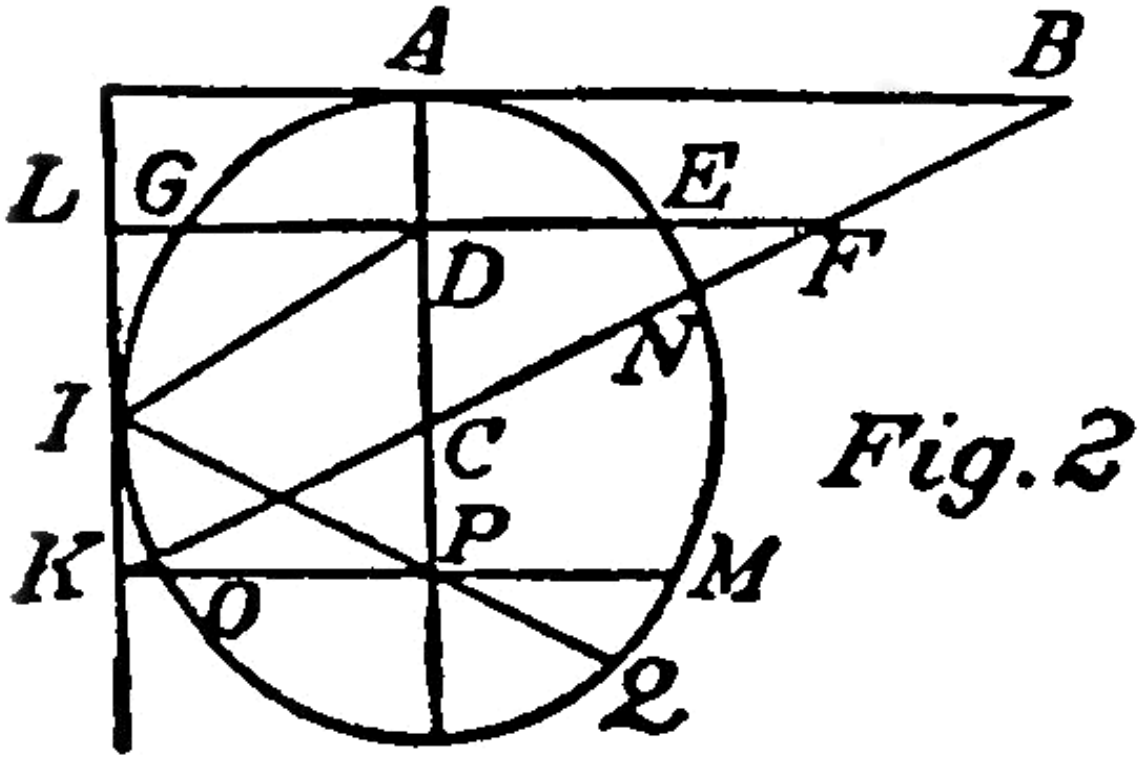


Fig. 2

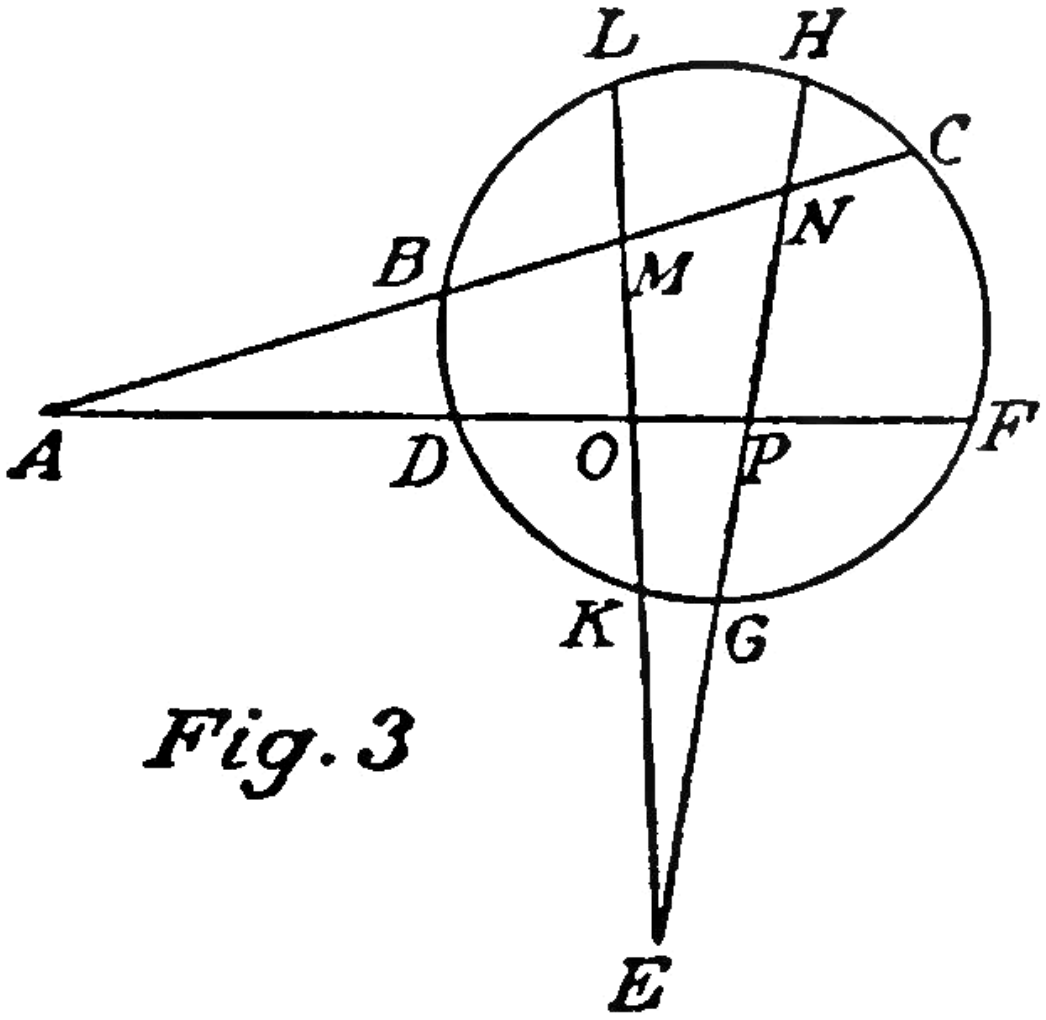


Fig. 3

If in the plane M, S, *Q,* two straight lines *MK, MV,* are drawn from point *M* and two lines *SK, SV* from point *S;* and if *K* be the point of intersection of the lines *MK, SK; V,* the point of intersection of the lines *MV, SV; A,* the point of intersection of the lines *MA, SA;* and *μ,* the point of intersection of the lines *MV, SK;* and if through two of the four points *A, K, μ, V,* which can not lie in the same line with points *M, S,* and also through points *K, V,* a circle passes cutting the lines *MV, MP, SV, SK* at points O, *P, Q, N,* then I say that the lines *MS, NO, PQ,* are of the same order.

Lemma II

If through the same line several planes are passed, and are cut by another plane, all lines of intersection of these planes are of the same order as the line through which these planes pass.

On the basis of these two lemmas and several easy deductions from them, we can demonstrate that if the same things are granted as for the first lemma, that is, through points *K, V,* any conic section whatever passes cutting the lines *MK, MV, SK, SV* in points P, O, *N, Q,* then the lines *MS, NO, PQ* will be of the same order. This constitutes a third lemma. [This involves the so-called "Mystic Hexagram," the dual of Brianchon's Theorem. Pascal did not state the hexagram theorem in the form commonly seen in textbooks.]

By means of these three lemmas and certain deductions, therefrom, we propose to derive a complete ordered sequence of conics, [.. des éléments coniques complets] that is to say, all the properties of diameters and other straight lines, [... et côtés droits] of tangents, &c., the construction of the cone from substantially these data, the description of conic sections by points, etc.

Having done this, we shall state the properties which follow, doing this in a more general manner than usual. Take for example, the following: If in the plane *MSQ,* in the conic *PKV,* there are drawn the lines *AK, AV,* cutting the conic in points *P, K, Q, V;* and if from two of these four points, which do not lie in the same line with point *A,* — say the points *K, V,* and through two points *N, O,* taken on the conic, there are produced four lines *KN, KO, VN, VO,* cutting the lines *AV, AP* at points *L, M, T, S,* — then I maintain that the proportion composed of the ratios of the line *PM* to the line *MA,* and of the line *AS* to the line *SQ,* is the same as the proportion composed of the ratio of the line *PL* to the line *LA,* and of the line *AT* to the line *TQ*.

We can also demonstrate that if there are three lines *DE, DG, DH* that are cut by the lines *AP, AR* at points *F, G, H, C, y, B,* and if the point *E* be fixed in the line *DC,* the proportion composed of the ratios of the rectangle *EF.FG* to the rectangle *EC.Cy,* and of the line *Ay* to the line *AG,* is the same as the ratio of the rectangle *EF.FH* to the rectangle *EC.CB,* and of the line *AB* to the line *AH*. The same is also

true with respect to the ratio of the rectangle *FE.FD* to the rectangle *CE.CD.* Consequently, if a conic section passes through the points *E, D,* cutting the lines *AH, AB* in points P, *K, R, ψ,* the proportion composed of the ratio of the rectangle of these lines *EF, FC,* to the rectangle of the lines *EC, Cγ,* and of the line *γA* to the line *AG,* will be the same as the ratio of the rectangle of the lines *FK, FP,* to the rectangle of the lines *CR, Cψ,* and of the rectangle of the lines *AR, Aψ,* to the rectangle of the lines *AK, AP.*

We can also show that if four lines *AC, AF, EH, EL* intersect in points *N, P, M, O,* and if a conic section cuts these lines in points C, *B, F, D, H, G,* L, *K,* the proportion consisting of the ratios of rectangle *MC.MB* to rectangle *PF.PD,* and of rectangle *AD.AF* to rectangle *AB.AC,* is the same as the proportion composed of the ratios of rectangle *ML.MK* to the rectangle *PH.PG,* and of rectangle *EH.EG* to rectangle *EK.EL.*

We can also demonstrate a property stated below, due to M. DESARGUES of Lyons, one of the great geniuses of this time and well versed in mathematics, particularly in conics, whose writings on this subject although few in number give abundant proof of his knowledge to those who seek for information. I should like to say that I owe the little that I have found on this subject to his writings, and that I have tried to imitate his method, as far as possible, in which he has treated the subject without making use of the triangle through the axis.

Giving a general treatment of conic sections, the following is the remarkable property under discussion: If in the plane *MSQ* there is a conic section *PQN,* on which are taken four points *K, N, O, V* from which are drawn the lines *KN, KO, VN, VO,* in such a way that through the same four points only two lines may pass, and if another line cuts the conic at points *R, ψ,* and the lines *KN, KO, VN, VO,* in points *X, Y, Z,* δ, then as the rectangle *ZR.Zψ* is to the rectangle *γR.γψ,* so the rectangle *δR.δφ* is to the rectangle *XR.Xψ.*

We can also prove that, if in the plane of the hyperbola, the ellipse, or the circle *AGE* of which the center is *C,* the line *AB* is drawn touching the section at *A,* and if having drawn the diameter we take line *AB* such that its square shall be equal to

the square of the figure, [In order that the square of segment *AB,* which is equal to *DE* + *DF,* shall be equal to one fourth of the circumscribed rectangle, the conic must be a circle. If the conic is an ellipse, *AB* will be taken equal to the axis which is perpendicular to *CA*. DESARGUES treated analogous questions in his *Brouillon Projet* (Œuvres de DESARGUES, I, p. 202 et p. 284).] and if *CB* is drawn, then any line such as *DE,* parallel to line *AB* and cutting the section in *E,* and the lines *AC, CB* in points *D, F,* then if the section *AGE* is an ellipse or a circle, the sum of the squares of the lines *DE, DF* will be equal to the square of the line *AB;* and in the hyperbola, the difference between the same squares of the lines *DE, DF* will be equal to the square of the line *AB*.

We can also deduce [from this] several problems; for example:

From a given point to draw a tangent to a given conic section.

To find two diameters that meet in a given angle.

To find two diameters cutting at a given angle and having a given ratio.

There are many other problems and theorems, and many deductions which can be made from what has been stated above, but the distrust which I have, due to my little experience and capacity, does not allow me to go further into the subject until it has passed the examination of able men who may be willing to take this trouble. After that if someone thinks the subject worth continuing, I shall endeavor to extend it as far as God gives me the strength.

At Paris, M.DC.XL.

The Provincial Letters (1657)

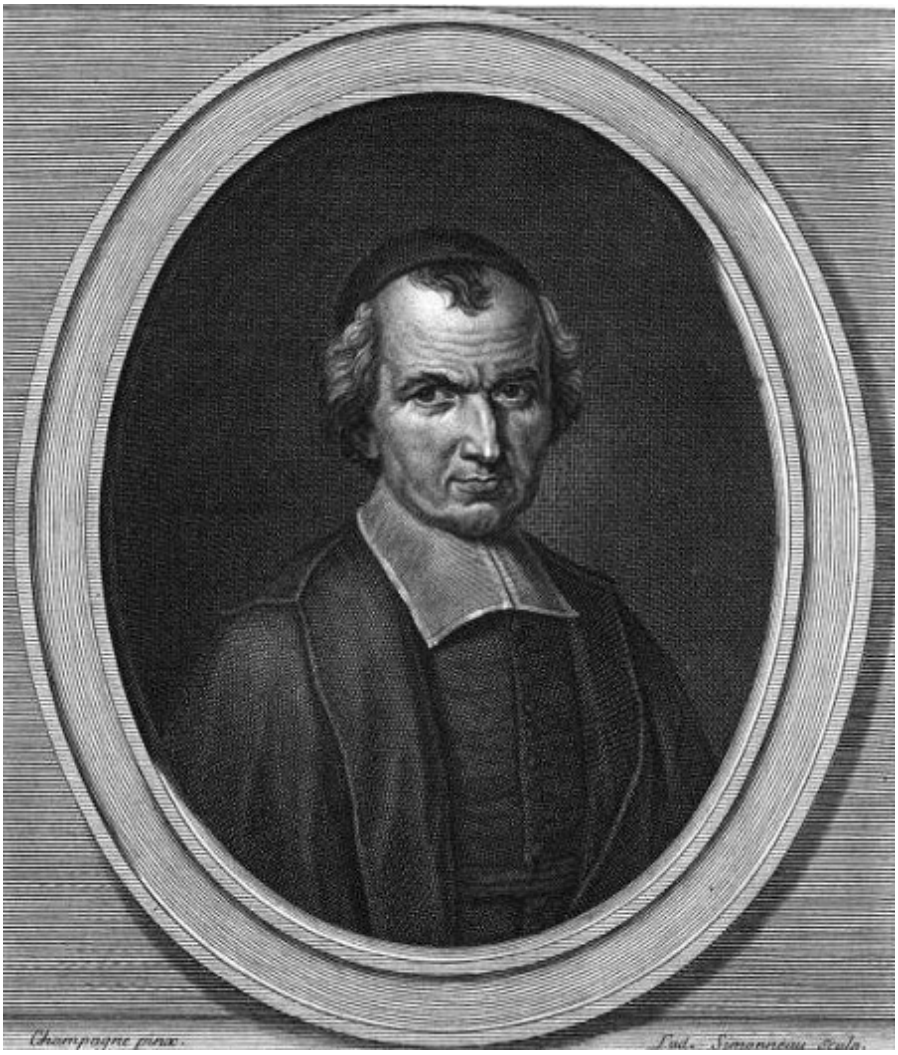


Translated by Thomas M'Crie, 1860

Lettres provinciales is a series of eighteen letters written by Blaise Pascal under the pseudonym Louis de Montalte. Produced in the midst of the formulary controversy between the Jansenists and the Jesuits, they serve as a defense of the Jansenist Antoine Arnauld, a friend of Pascal's from Port-Royal-des-Champs, who in 1656 was condemned by the Faculté de Théologie at the Sorbonne in Paris for views deemed as heretical. The First letter is dated 23 January 1656 and the Eighteenth and last complete letter bears the date 24 March 1657. A fragmentary Nineteenth letter is frequently included with the other eighteen.

In these letters, Pascal amusingly attacks casuistry, a rhetorical method often employed by Jesuit theologians, while accusing Jesuits of moral laxity. Being forced underground while writing the *Lettres provinciales*, Pascal pretended they were reports from a Parisian to a friend in the provinces, detailing the moral and theological issues then exciting the intellectual and religious circles of the capital.

In the text, Pascal's tone combines the fervour of a convert with the wit and polish of a man of the world. The letters are noted for their urbane style and use of humour, mocker, and satire, which enabled the collection to become a popular classic of French literature. *Lettres provinciales* also went on to influence the prose of later writers like Voltaire and Jean-Jacques Rousseau.



Antoine Arnauld (1612-1694) was a Roman Catholic theologian, philosopher and mathematician. He was one of the leading intellectuals of the Jansenist group of Port-Royal and had a very thorough knowledge of patristics (the study of the early Christian Church Fathers).

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LETTER I



PARIS, JANUARY 23, 1656

SIR,

We were entirely mistaken. It was only yesterday that I was undeceived. Until that time I had laboured under the impression that the disputes in the Sorbonne were vastly important, and deeply affected the interests of religion. The frequent convocations of an assembly so illustrious as that of the Theological Faculty of Paris, attended by so many extraordinary and unprecedented circumstances, led one to form such high expectations that it was impossible to help coming to the conclusion that the subject was most extraordinary. You will be greatly surprised, however, when you learn from the following account the issue of this grand demonstration, which, having made myself perfectly master of the subject, I shall be able to tell you in very few words.

Two questions, then, were brought under examination; the one a question of fact, the other a question of right.

The question of fact consisted in ascertaining whether M. Arnauld was guilty of presumption, for having asserted in his second letter that he had carefully perused the book of Jansenius, and that he had not discovered the propositions condemned by the late pope; but that, nevertheless, as he condemned these propositions wherever they might occur, he condemned them in Jansenius, if they were really contained in that work.

The question here was, if he could, without presumption, entertain a doubt that these propositions were in Jansenius, after the bishops had declared that they were.

The matter having been brought before the Sorbonne, seventy-one doctors undertook his defence, maintaining that the only reply he could possibly give to the demands made upon him in so many publications, calling on him to say if he held that these propositions were in that book, was that he had not been able to find them, but that if they were in the book, he condemned them in the book.

Some even went a step farther and protested that, after all the search they had made into the book, they had never stumbled upon these propositions, and that they had, on the contrary, found sentiments entirely at variance with them. They then earnestly begged that, if any doctor present had discovered them, he would have the goodness to point them out; adding that what was so easy could not reasonably be refused, as this would be the surest way to silence the whole of them, M. Arnauld included; but this proposal has been uniformly declined. So much for the one side.

On the other side are eighty secular doctors and some forty mendicant friars, who have condemned M. Arnauld's proposition, without choosing to examine whether he has spoken truly or falsely- who, in fact, have declared that they have nothing to do with the veracity of his proposition, but simply with its temerity.

Besides these, there were fifteen who were not in favor of the censure, and who are called Neutrals.

Such was the issue of the question of fact, regarding which, I must say, I give myself very little concern. It does not affect my conscience in the least whether M. Arnauld is presumptuous or the reverse; and should I be tempted, from curiosity, to ascertain whether these propositions are contained in Jansenius, his book is neither so very rare nor so very large as to hinder me from reading it over from beginning to end, for my own satisfaction, without consulting the Sorbonne on the matter.

Were it not, however, for the dread of being presumptuous myself, I really think that I would be disposed to adopt the opinion which has been formed by the most of my acquaintances, who, though they have believed hitherto on common report that the propositions were in Jansenius, begin now to suspect the contrary,

owing to this strange refusal to point them out- a refusal the more extraordinary to me as I have not yet met with a single individual who can say that he has discovered them in that work. I am afraid, therefore, that this censure will do more harm than good, and that the impression which it will leave on the minds of all who know its history will be just the reverse of the conclusion that has been come to. The truth is the world has become sceptical of late and will not believe things till it sees them. But, as I said before, this point is of very little moment, as it has no concern with religion.

The question of right, from its affecting the faith, appears much more important, and, accordingly, I took particular pains in examining it. You will be relieved, however, to find that it is of as little consequence as the former.

The point of dispute here was an assertion of M. Arnauld's in the same letter, to the effect "that the grace, without which we can do nothing, was wanting to St. Peter at his fall." You and I supposed that the controversy here would turn upon the great principles of grace; such as whether grace is given to all men? Or if it is efficacious of itself? But we were quite mistaken. You must know I have become a great theologian within this short time; and now for the proofs of it!

To ascertain the matter with certainty, I repaired to my neighbor, M. N-, doctor of Navarre, who, as you are aware, is one of the keenest opponents of the Jansenists, and, my curiosity having made me almost as keen as himself, I asked him if they would not formally decide at once that "grace is given to all men," and thus set the question at rest. But he gave me a sore rebuff and told me that that was not the point; that there were some of his party who held that grace was not given to all; that the examiners themselves had declared, in a full assembly of the Sorbonne, that that opinion was problematical; and that he himself held the same sentiment, which he confirmed by quoting to me what he called that celebrated passage of St. Augustine: "We know that grace is not given to all men."

I apologized for having misapprehended his sentiment and requested him to say if they would not at least condemn that other opinion of the Jansenists which

is making so much noise: “That grace is efficacious of itself, and invincibly determines our will to what is good.” But in this second query I was equally unfortunate. “You know nothing about the matter,” he said; “that is not a heresy- it is an orthodox opinion; all the Thomists maintain it; and I myself have defended it in my Sorbonic thesis.”

I did not venture again to propose my doubts, and yet I was as far as ever from understanding where the difficulty lay; so, at last, in order to get at it, I begged him to tell me where, then, lay the heresy of M. Arnauld’s proposition. “It lies here,” said he, “that he does not acknowledge that the righteous have the power of obeying the commandments of God, in the manner in which we understand it.”

On receiving this piece of information, I took my leave of him; and, quite proud at having discovered the knot of the question, I sought M. N-, who is gradually getting better and was sufficiently recovered to conduct me to the house of his brother-in-law, who is a Jansenist, if ever there was one, but a very good man notwithstanding. Thinking to insure myself a better reception, I pretended to be very high on what I took to be his side, and said: “Is it possible that the Sorbonne has introduced into the Church such an error as this, ‘that all the righteous have always the power of obeying the commandments of God?’”

“What say you?” replied the doctor. “Call you that an error- a sentiment so Catholic that none but Lutherans and Calvinists impugn it?”

“Indeed!” said I, surprised in my turn; “so you are not of their opinion?”

“No,” he replied; “we anathematize it as heretical and impious.”

Confounded by this reply, I soon discovered that I had overacted the Jansenist, as I had formerly overdone the Molinist. But, not being sure if I had rightly understood him, I requested him to tell me frankly if he held “that the righteous have always a real power to observe the divine precepts?” Upon this, the good man got warm (but it was with a holy zeal) and protested that he would not disguise his sentiments on any consideration- that such was, indeed, his belief, and that he and all his party would defend it to the death, as the pure doctrine of St. Thomas, and of St. Augustine their master.

This was spoken so seriously as to leave me no room for doubt; and under this impression I returned to my first doctor and said to him, with an air of great satisfaction, that I was sure there would be peace in the Sorbonne very soon; that the Jansenists were quite at one with them in reference to the power of the righteous to obey the commandments of God; that I could pledge my word for them and could make them seal it with their blood.

"Hold there!" said he. "One must be a theologian to see the point of this question. The difference between us is so subtle that it is with some difficulty we can discern it ourselves- you will find it rather too much for your powers of comprehension. Content yourself, then, with knowing that it is very true the Jansenists will tell you that all the righteous have always the power of obeying the commandments; that is not the point in dispute between us; but mark you, they will not tell you that that power is proximate. That is the point."

This was a new and unknown word to me. Up to this moment I had managed to understand matters, but that term involved me in obscurity; and I verily believe that it has been invented for no other purpose than to mystify. I requested him to give me an explanation of it, but he made a mystery of it, and sent me back, without any further satisfaction, to demand of the Jansenists if they would admit this proximate power. Having charged my memory with the phrase (as to my understanding, that was out of the question), I hastened with all possible expedition, fearing that I might forget it, to my Jansenist friend and accosted him, immediately after our first salutations, with: "Tell me, pray, if you admit the proximate power?" He smiled, and replied, coldly: "Tell me yourself in what sense you understand it, and I may then inform you what I think of it." As my knowledge did not extend quite so far, I was at a loss what reply to make; and yet, rather than lose the object of my visit, I said at random: "Why, I understand it in the sense of the Molinists." "To which of the Molinists do you refer me?" replied he, with the utmost coolness. I referred him to the whole of them together, as forming one body, and animated by one spirit.

“You know very little about the matter,” returned he. “So far are they from being united in sentiment that some of them are diametrically opposed to each other. But, being all united in the design to ruin M. Arnauld, they have resolved to agree on this term proximate, which both parties might use indiscriminately, though they understand it diversely, that thus, by a similarity of language and an apparent conformity, they may form a large body and get up a majority to crush him with the greater certainty.”

This reply filled me with amazement; but, without imbibing these impressions of the malicious designs of the Molinists, which I am unwilling to believe on his word, and with which I have no concern, I set myself simply to ascertain the various senses which they give to that mysterious word proximate. “I would enlighten you on the subject with all my heart,” he said; “but you would discover in it such a mass of contrariety and contradiction that you would hardly believe me. You would suspect me. To make sure of the matter, you had better learn it from some of themselves; and I shall give you some of their addresses. You have only to make a separate visit to one called M. le Moine and to Father Nicolai.”

“I have no acquaintance with any of these persons,” said I.

“Let me see, then,” he replied, “if you know any of those whom I shall name to you; they all agree in sentiment with M. le Moine.”

I happened, in fact, to know some of them.

“Well, let us see if you are acquainted with any of the Dominicans whom they call the ‘New Thomists,’ for they are all the same with Father Nicolai.”

I knew some of them also whom he named; and, resolved to profit by this council and to investigate the matter, I took my leave of him and went immediately to one of the disciples of M. le Moine. I begged him to inform me what it was to have the proximate power of doing a thing.

“It is easy to tell you that, “ he replied; “it is merely to have all that is necessary for doing it in such a manner that nothing is wanting to performance.”

“And so,” said I, “to have the proximate power of crossing a river, for example, is to have a boat, boatmen, oars, and all the rest, so that nothing is

wanting?”

“Exactly so,” said the monk.

“And to have the proximate power of seeing,” continued I, “must be to have good eyes and the light of day; for a person with good sight in the dark would not have the proximate power of seeing, according to you, as he would want the light, without which one cannot see?”

“Precisely,” said he.

“And consequently,” returned I, “when you say that all the righteous have the proximate power of observing the commandments of God, you mean that they have always all the grace necessary for observing them, so that nothing is wanting to them on the part of God.”

“Stay there,” he replied; “they have always all that is necessary for observing the commandments, or at least for asking it of God.”

“I understand you,” said I; “they have all that is necessary for praying to God to assist them, without requiring any new grace from God to enable them to pray.”

“You have it now,” he rejoined.

“But is it not necessary that they have an efficacious grace, in order to pray to God?”

“No,” said he; “not according to M. le Moine.”

To lose no time, I went to the Jacobins, and requested an interview with some whom I knew to be New Thomists, and I begged them to tell me what proximate power was. “Is it not,” said I, “that power to which nothing is wanting in order to act?”

“No,” said they.

“Indeed! fathers,” said I; “if anything is wanting to that power, do you call it proximate? Would you say, for instance, that a man in the night-time, and without any light, had the proximate power of seeing?”

“Yes, indeed, he would have it, in our opinion, if he is not blind.”

“I grant that,” said I; “but M. le Moine understands it in a different manner.”

“Very true,” they replied; “but so it is that we understand it.”

“I have no objections to that,” I said; “for I never quarrel about a name, provided I am apprised of the sense in which it is understood. But I perceive from this that, when you speak of the righteous having always the proximate power of praying to God, you understand that they require another supply for praying, without which they will never pray.”

“Most excellent!” exclaimed the good fathers, embracing me; “exactly the thing; for they must have, besides, an efficacious grace bestowed upon all, and which determines their wills to pray; and it is heresy to deny the necessity of that efficacious grace in order to pray.”

“Most excellent!” cried I, in return; “but, according to you, the Jansenists are Catholics, and M. le Moine a heretic; for the Jansenists maintain that, while the righteous have power to pray, they require nevertheless an efficacious grace; and this is what you approve. M. le Moine, again, maintains that the righteous may pray without efficacious grace; and this is what you condemn.”

“Ay,” said they; “but M. le Moine calls that power ‘proximate power.’”

“How now! fathers,” I exclaimed; “this is merely playing with words, to say that you are agreed as to the common terms which you employ, while you differ with them as to the sense of these terms.”

The fathers made no reply; and at this juncture, who should come in but my old friend, the disciple of M. le Moine! I regarded this at the time as an extraordinary piece of good fortune; but I have discovered since then that such meetings are not rare- that, in fact, they are constantly mixing in each other’s society.

“I know a man,” said I, addressing myself to M. le Moine’s disciple, “who holds that all the righteous have always the power of praying to God, but that, notwithstanding this, they will never pray without an efficacious grace which determines them, and which God does not always give to all the righteous. Is he a heretic?”

“Stay,” said the doctor; “you might take me by surprise. Let us go cautiously to work. Distinguo. If he call that power proximate power, he will be a Thomist, and

therefore a Catholic; if not, he will be a Jansenist and, therefore, a heretic."

"He calls it neither proximate nor non-proximate," said I.

"Then he is a heretic," quoth he; "I refer you to these good fathers if he is not."

I did not appeal to them as judges, for they had already nodded assent; but I said to them: "He refuses to admit that word proximate, because he can meet with nobody who will explain it to him."

Upon this one of the fathers was on the point of offering his definition of the term, when he was interrupted by M. le Moine's disciple, who said to him: "Do you mean, then, to renew our broils? Have we not agreed not to explain that word proximate, but to use it on both sides without saying what it signifies?" To this the Jacobin gave his assent.

I was thus let into the whole secret of their plot; and, rising to take my leave of them, I remarked: "Indeed, fathers, I am much afraid this is nothing better than pure chicanery; and, whatever may be the result of your convocations, I venture to predict that, though the censure should pass, peace will not be established. For though it should be decided that the syllables of that word proximate should be pronounced, who does not see that, the meaning not being explained, each of you will be disposed to claim the victory? The Jacobins will contend that the word is to be understood in their sense; M. le Moine will insist that it must be taken in his; and thus there will be more wrangling about the explanation of the word than about its introduction. For, after all, there would be no great danger in adopting it without any sense, seeing it is through the sense only that it can do any harm. But it would be unworthy of the Sorbonne and of theology to employ equivocal and captious terms without giving any explanation of them. In short, fathers, tell me, I entreat you, for the last time, what is necessary to be believed in order to be a good Catholic?"

"You must say," they all vociferated simultaneously, "that all the righteous have the proximate power, abstracting from it all sense- from the sense of the Thomists and the sense of other divines."

“That is to say,” I replied, in taking leave of them, “that I must pronounce that word to avoid being the heretic of a name. For, pray, is this a Scripture word?” “No,” said they. “Is it a word of the Fathers, the Councils, or the Popes?” “No.” “Is the word, then, used by St. Thomas?” “No.” “What necessity, therefore, is there for using it since it has neither the authority of others nor any sense of itself.?” “You are an opinionative fellow,” said they; “but you shall say it, or you shall be a heretic, and M. Arnauld into the bargain; for we are the majority, and, should it be necessary, we can bring a sufficient number of Cordeliers into the field to carry the day.”

On hearing this solid argument, I took my leave of them, to write you the foregoing account of my interview, from which you will perceive that the following points remain undisputed and uncondemned by either party. First, That grace is not given to all men. Second, That all the righteous have always the power of obeying the divine commandments. Third, That they require, nevertheless, in order to obey them, and even to pray, an efficacious grace, which invincibly determines their will. Fourth, That this efficacious grace is not always granted to all the righteous, and that it depends on the pure mercy of God. So that, after all, the truth is safe, and nothing runs any risk but that word without the sense, proximate.

Happy the people who are ignorant of its existence! happy those who lived before it was born! for I see no help for it, unless the gentlemen of the Acadamy, by an act of absolute authority, banish that barbarous term, which causes so many divisions, from beyond the precincts of the Sorbonne. Unless this be done, the censure appears certain; but I can easily see that it will do no other harm than diminish the credit of the Sorbonne, and deprive it of that authority which is so necessary to it on other occasions.

Meanwhile, I leave you at perfect liberty to hold by the word proximate or not, just as you please; for I love you too much to persecute you under that pretext. If this account is not displeasing to you, I shall continue to apprise you of all that happens. I am, &c.

LETTER II



Paris, January 29, 1656

SIR,

Just as I had sealed up my last letter, I received a visit from our old friend M. N-. Nothing could have happened more luckily for my curiosity; for he is thoroughly informed in the questions of the day and is completely in the secret of the Jesuits, at whose houses, including those of their leading men, he is a constant visitor. After having talked over the business which brought him to my house, I asked him to state, in a few words, what were the points in dispute between the two parties.

He immediately complied, and informed me that the principal points were two- the first about the proximate power, and the second about sufficient grace. I have enlightened you on the first of these points in my former letter and shall now speak of the second.

In one word, then, I found that their difference about sufficient grace may be defined thus: The Jesuits maintain that there is a grace given generally to all men, subject in such a way to free-will that the will renders it efficacious or inefficacious at its pleasure, without any additional aid from God and without wanting anything on his part in order to act effectively; and hence they term this grace sufficient, because it suffices of itself for action. The Jansenists, on the other hand, will not allow that any grace is actually sufficient which is not also efficacious; that is, that all those kinds of grace which do not determine the will to act effectively are insufficient for action; for they hold that a man can never act without efficacious grace.

Such are the points in debate between the Jesuits and the Jansenists; and my next object was to ascertain the doctrine of the New Thomists. “It is rather an odd

one," he said; "they agree with the Jesuits in admitting a sufficient grace given to all men; but they maintain, at the same time, that no man can act with this grace alone, but that, in order to do this, he must receive from God an efficacious grace which really determines his will to the action, and which God does not grant to all men." "So that, according to this doctrine," said I, "this grace is sufficient without being sufficient." "Exactly so," he replied; "for if it suffices, there is no need of anything more for acting; and if it does not suffice, why- it is not sufficient."

"But," asked I, "where, then, is the difference between them and the Jansenists?" "They differ in this," he replied, "that the Dominicans have this good qualification, that they do not refuse to say that all men have the sufficient grace." "I understand you," returned I; "but they say it without thinking it; for they add that, in order to act, we must have an efficacious grace which is not given to all, consequently, if they agree with the Jesuits in the use of a term which has no sense, they differ from them and coincide with the Jansenists in the substance of the thing. That is very true, said he. "How, then," said I, "are the Jesuits united with them? and why do they not combat them as well as the Jansenists, since they will always find powerful antagonists in these men, who, by maintaining the necessity of the efficacious grace which determines the will, will prevent them from establishing that grace which they hold to be of itself sufficient?"

"The Dominicans are too powerful," he replied, "and the Jesuits are too politic, to come to an open rupture with them. The Society is content with having prevailed on them so far as to admit the name of sufficient grace, though they understand it in another sense; by which manoeuvre they gain this advantage, that they will make their opinion appear untenable, as soon as they judge it proper to do so. And this will be no difficult matter; for, let it be once granted that all men have the sufficient graces, nothing can be more natural than to conclude that the efficacious grace is not necessary to action- the sufficiency of the general grace precluding the necessity of all others. By saying sufficient we express all that is necessary for action; and it will serve little purpose for the Dominicans to exclaim that they attach another sense to the expression; the people, accustomed to the

common acceptation of that term, would not even listen to their explanation. Thus the Society gains a sufficient advantage from the expression which has been adopted by the Dominicans, without pressing them any further; and were you but acquainted with what passed under Popes Clement VIII and Paul V, and knew how the Society was thwarted by the Dominicans in the establishment of the sufficient grace, you would not be surprised to find that it avoids embroiling itself in quarrels with them and allows them to hold their own opinion, provided that of the Society is left untouched; and more especially, when the Dominicans countenance its doctrine, by agreeing to employ, on all public occasions, the term sufficient grace.

"The Society," he continued, "is quite satisfied with their complaisance. It does not insist on their denying the necessity of efficacious grace, this would be urging them too far. People should not tyrannize over their friends; and the Jesuits have gained quite enough. The world is content with words; few think of searching into the nature of things; and thus the name of sufficient grace being adopted on both sides, though in different senses, there is nobody, except the most subtle theologians, who ever dreams of doubting that the thing signified by that word is held by the Jacobins as well as by the Jesuits; and the result will show that these last are not the greatest dupes."

I acknowledged that they were a shrewd class of people, these Jesuits; and, availing myself of his advice, I went straight to the Jacobins, at whose gate I found one of my good friends, a staunch Jansenist (for you must know I have got friends among all parties), who was calling for another monk, different from him whom I was in search of. I prevailed on him, however, after much entreaty, to accompany me, and asked for one of my New Thomists. He was delighted to see me again. "How now! my dear father," I began, "it seems it is not enough that all men have a proximate power, with which they can never act with effect; they must have besides this a sufficient grace, with which they can act as little. Is not that the doctrine of your school?" "It is," said the worthy monk; "and I was upholding it this very morning in the Sorbonne. I spoke on the point during my

whole half-hour; and, but for the sand-glass, I bade fair to have reversed that wicked proverb, now so current in Paris: ‘He votes without speaking, like a monk in the Sorbonne.’” “What do you mean by your half-hour and your sand-glass?” I asked; “do they cut your speeches by a certain measure?” “Yes,” said he, “they have done so for some days past.” “And do they oblige you to speak for half an hour?” “No; we may speak as little as we please.” “But not as much as you please, said I. “O what a capital regulation for the boobies! what a blessed excuse for those who have nothing worth the saying! But, to return to the point, father; this grace given to all men is sufficient, is it not?” “Yes,” said he. “And yet it has no effect without efficacious grace?” “None whatever,” he replied. “And all men have the sufficient,” continued I, “and all have not the efficacious?” “Exactly,” said he. “That is,” returned I, “all have enough of grace, and all have not enough of it that is, this grace suffices, though it does not suffice- that is, it is sufficient in name and insufficient in effect! In good sooth, father, this is particularly subtle doctrine! Have you forgotten, since you retired to the cloister, the meaning attached, in the world you have quitted, to the word sufficient? don’t you remember that it includes all that is necessary for acting? But no, you cannot have lost all recollection of it; for, to avail myself of an illustration which will come home more vividly to your feelings, let us suppose that you were supplied with no more than two ounces of bread and a glass of water daily, would you be quite pleased with your prior were he to tell you that this would be sufficient to support you, under the pretext that, along with something else, which however, he would not give you, you would have all that would be necessary to support you? How, then can you allow yourselves to say that all men have sufficient grace for acting, while you admit that there is another grace absolutely necessary to acting which all men have not? Is it because this is an unimportant article of belief, and you leave all men at liberty to believe that efficacious grace is necessary or not, as they choose? Is it a matter of indifference to say, that with sufficient grace a man may really act?” “How!” cried the good man; “indifference! it is heresy- formal

heresy. The necessity of efficacious grace for acting effectively, is a point of faith- it is heresy to deny it."

"Where are we now?" I exclaimed; "and which side am I to take here? If I deny the sufficient grace, I am a Jansenist. If I admit it, as the Jesuits do, in the way of denying that efficacious grace is necessary, I shall be a heretic, say you. And if I admit it, as you do, in the way of maintaining the necessity of efficacious grace, I sin against common sense, and am a blockhead, say the Jesuits. What must I do, thus reduced to the inevitable necessity of being a blockhead, a heretic, or a Jansenist? And what a sad pass are matters come to, if there are none but the Jansenists who avoid coming into collision either with the faith or with reason, and who save themselves at once from absurdity and from error!"

My Jansenist friend took this speech as a good omen and already looked upon me as a convert. He said nothing to me, however; but, addressing the monk: "Pray, father," inquired he, "what is the point on which you agree with the Jesuits?" "We agree in this," he replied, "that the Jesuits and we acknowledge the sufficient grace given to all." "But," said the Jansenist, "there are two things in this expression sufficient grace- there is the sound, which is only so much breath; and there is the thing which it signifies, which is real and effectual. And, therefore, as you are agreed with the Jesuits in regard to the word sufficient and opposed to them as to the sense, it is apparent that you are opposed to them in regard to the substance of that term, and that you only agree with them as to the sound. Is this what you call acting sincerely and cordially?"

"But," said the good man, "what cause have you to complain, since we deceive nobody by this mode of speaking? In our schools we openly teach that we understand it in a manner different from the Jesuits."

"What I complain of," returned my friend" "is, that you do not proclaim it everywhere, that by sufficient grace you understand the grace which is not sufficient. You are bound in conscience, by thus altering the sense of the ordinary terms of theology, to tell that, when you admit a sufficient grace in all men, you understand that they have not sufficient grace in effect. All classes of persons in

the world understand the word sufficient in one and the same sense; the New Thomists alone understand it in another sense. All the women, who form one-half of the world, all courtiers, all military men, all magistrates, all lawyers, merchants, artisans, the whole populace- in short, all sorts of men, except the Dominicans, understand the word sufficient to express all that is necessary. Scarcely any one is aware of this singular exception. It is reported over the whole earth, simply that the Dominicans hold that all men have the sufficient graces. What other conclusion can be drawn from this, than that they hold that all men have all the graces necessary for action; especially when they are seen joined in interest and intrigue with the Jesuits, who understand the thing in that sense? Is not the uniformity of your expressions, viewed in connection with this union of party, a manifest indication and confirmation of the uniformity of your sentiments?

"The multitude of the faithful inquire of theologians: What is the real condition of human nature since its corruption? St. Augustine and his disciples reply that it has no sufficient grace until God is pleased to bestow it. Next come the Jesuits, and they say that all have the effectually sufficient graces. The Dominicans are consulted on this contrariety of opinion; and what course do they pursue? They unite with the Jesuits; by this coalition they make up a majority; they secede from those who deny these sufficient graces; they declare that all men possess them. Who, on hearing this, would imagine anything else than that they gave their sanction to the opinion of the Jesuits? And then they add that, nevertheless, these said sufficient graces are perfectly useless without the efficacious, which are not given to all!

"Shall I present you with a picture of the Church amidst these conflicting sentiments? I consider her very like a man who, leaving his native country on a journey, is encountered by robbers, who inflict many wounds on him and leave him half dead. He sends for three physicians resident in the neighboring towns. The first, on probing his wounds, pronounces them mortal and assures him that none but God can restore to him his lost powers. The second, coming after the

other, chooses to flatter the man- tells him that he has still sufficient strength to reach his home; and, abusing the first physician who opposed his advice, determines upon his ruin. In this dilemma, the poor patient, observing the third medical gentleman at a distance, stretches out his hands to him as the person who should determine the controversy. This practitioner, on examining his wounds, and ascertaining the opinions of the first two doctors, embraces that of the second, and uniting with him, the two combine against the first, and being the stronger party in number drive him from the field in disgrace. From this proceeding, the patient naturally concludes that the last comer is of the same opinion with the second; and, on putting the question to him, he assures him most positively that his strength is sufficient for prosecuting his journey. The wounded man, however, sensible of his own weakness, begs him to explain to him how he considered him sufficient for the journey. 'Because,' replies his adviser, 'you are still in possession of your legs, and legs are the organs which naturally suffice for walking.' 'But,' says the patient, 'have I all the strength necessary to make use of my legs? for, in my present weak condition, it humbly appears to me that they are wholly useless.' 'Certainly you have not,' replies the doctor; 'you will never walk effectively, unless God vouchsafes some extraordinary assistance to sustain and conduct you.' 'What!' exclaims the poor man, 'do you not mean to say that I have sufficient strength in me, so as to want for nothing to walk effectively?' 'Very far from it,' returns the physician. 'You must, then,' says the patient, 'be of a different opinion from your companion there about my real condition.' 'I must admit that I am,' replies the other.

"What do you suppose the patient said to this? Why, he complained of the strange conduct and ambiguous terms of this third physician. He censured him for taking part with the second, to whom he was opposed in sentiment, and with whom he had only the semblance of agreement, and for having driven away the first doctor, with whom he in reality agreed; and, after making a trial of strength, and finding by experience his actual weakness, he sent them both about their business, recalled his first adviser, put himself under his care, and having, by his

advice, implored from God the strength of which he confessed his need, obtained the mercy he sought, and, through divine help, reached his house in peace.

The worthy monk was so confounded with this parable that he could not find words to reply. To cheer him up a little, I said to him, in a mild tone: “But after all, my dear father, what made you think of giving the name of sufficient to a grace which you say it is a point of faith to believe is, in fact, insufficient?” “It is very easy for you to talk about it,” said he. “You are an independent and private man; I am a monk and in a community- cannot you estimate the difference between the two cases? We depend on superiors; they depend on others. They have promised our votes- what would you have to become of me?” We understood the hint; and this brought to our recollection the case of his brother monk, who, for a similar piece of indiscretion, has been exiled to Abbeville.

“But,” I resumed, “how comes it about that your community is bound to admit this grace?” “That is another question,” he replied. “All that I can tell you is, in one word, that our order has defended, to the utmost of its ability, the doctrine of St. Thomas on efficacious grace. With what ardor did it oppose, from the very commencement, the doctrine of Molina? How did it labor to establish the necessity of the efficacious grace of Jesus Christ? Don’t you know what happened under Clement VIII and Paul V, and how, the former having been prevented by death, and the latter hindered by some Italian affairs from publishing his bull, our arms still sleep in the Vatican? But the Jesuits, availing themselves, since the introduction of the heresy of Luther and Calvin, of the scanty light which the people possess for discriminating between the error of these men and the truth of the doctrine of St. Thomas, disseminated their principles with such rapidity and success that they became, ere long, masters of the popular belief; while we, on our part, found ourselves in the predicament of being denounced as Calvinists and treated as the Jansenists are at present, unless we qualified the efficacious grace with, at least, the apparent avowal of a sufficient. In this extremity, what better course could we have taken for saving the truth, without losing our own credit,

than by admitting the name of sufficient grace, while we denied that it was such in effect? Such is the real history of the case."

This was spoken in such a melancholy tone that I really began to pity the man; not so, however, my companion. "Flatter not yourselves," said he to the monk, "with having saved the truth; had she not found other defenders, in your feeble hands she must have perished. By admitting into the Church the name of her enemy, you have admitted the enemy himself. Names are inseparable from things. If the term sufficient grace be once established, it will be vain for you to protest that you understand by it a grace which is not sufficient. Your protest will be held inadmissible. Your explanation would be scouted as odious in the world, where men speak more ingenuously about matters of infinitely less moment. The Jesuits will gain a triumph- it will be their grace, which is sufficient in fact, and not yours, which is only so in name, that will pass as established; and the converse of your creed will become an article of faith."

"We will all suffer martyrdom first," cried the father, "rather than consent to the establishment of sufficient grace in the sense of the Jesuits. St. Thomas, whom we have sworn to follow even to the death, is diametrically opposed to such doctrine."

To this my friend, who took up the matter more seriously than I did, replied: "Come now, father, your fraternity has received an honor which it sadly abuses. It abandons that grace which was confided to its care, and which has never been abandoned since the creation of the world. That victorious grace, which was waited for by the patriarchs, predicted by the prophets, introduced by Jesus Christ, preached by St. Paul, explained by St. Augustine, the greatest of the fathers, embraced by his followers, confirmed by St. Bernard, the last of the fathers, supported by St. Thomas, the angel of the schools, transmitted by him to your order, maintained by so many of your fathers, and so nobly defended by your monks under Popes Clement and Paul- that efficacious grace, which had been committed as a sacred deposit into your hands, that it might find, in a sacred and everlasting order, a succession of preachers, who might proclaim it to the end of

time- is discarded and deserted for interests the most contemptible. It is high time for other hands to arm in its quarrel. It is time for God to raise up intrepid disciples of the Doctor of grace, who, strangers to the entanglements of the world, will serve God for God's sake. Grace may not, indeed, number the Dominicans among her champions, but champions she shall never want; for, by her own almighty energy, she creates them for herself. She demands hearts pure and disengaged; nay, she herself purifies and disengages them from worldly interests, incompatible with the truths of the Gospel. Reflect seriously, on this, father; and take care that God does not remove this candlestick from its place, leaving you in darkness and without the crown, as a punishment for the coldness which you manifest to a cause so important to his Church."

He might have gone on in this strain much longer, for he was kindling as he advanced, but I interrupted him by rising to take my leave and said: "Indeed, my dear father, had I any influence in France, I should have it proclaimed, by sound of trumpet: 'BE IT KNOWN TO ALL MEN, that when the Jacobins SAY that sufficient grace is given to all, they MEAN that all have not the grace which actually suffices!' After which, you might say it often as you please, but not otherwise." And thus ended our visit.

You will perceive, therefore, that we have here a politic sufficiency somewhat similar to proximate power. Meanwhile I may tell you that it appears to me that both the proximate power and this same sufficient grace may be safely doubted by anybody, provided he is not a Jacobin.

I have just come to learn, when closing my letter, that the censure has passed. But as I do not yet know in what terms it is worded, and as it will not be published till the 15th of February, I shall delay writing you about it till the next post. I am, &c.

REPLY OF THE "PROVINCIAL" TO THE FIRST TWO LETTERS OF HIS FRIEND



February 2, 1656

SIR,

Your two letters have not been confined to me. Everybody has seen them, everybody understands them, and everybody believes them. They are not only in high repute among theologians- they have proved agreeable to men of the world, and intelligible even to the ladies.

In a communication which I lately received from one of the gentlemen of the Academy- one of the most illustrious names in a society of men who are all illustrious- who had seen only your first letter, he writes me as follows: "I only wish that the Sorbonne, which owes so much to the memory of the late cardinal, would acknowledge the jurisdiction of his French Academy. The author of the letter would be satisfied; for, in the capacity of an academician, I would authoritatively condemn, I would banish, I would proscribe- I had almost said exterminate- to the extent of my power, this proximate power, which makes so much noise about nothing and without knowing what it would have. The misfortune is that our academic power is a very limited and remote power. I am sorry for it; and still more sorry that my small power cannot discharge me from my obligations to you," &c.

My next extract is from the pen of a lady, whom I shall not indicate in any way whatever. She writes thus to a female friend who had transmitted to her the first of your letters: "You can have no idea how much I am obliged to you for the letter you sent me- it is so very ingenious, and so nicely written. It narrates, and yet it is not a narrative; it clears up the most intricate and involved of all possible matters; its raillery is exquisite; it enlightens those who know little about the subject and

imparts double delight to those who understand it. It is an admirable apology; and, if they would so take it, a delicate and innocent censure. In short, that letter displays so much art, so much spirit, and so much judgment, that I burn with curiosity to know who wrote it," &c.

You too, perhaps, would like to know who the lady is that writes in this style; but you must be content to esteem without knowing her; when you come to know her, your esteem will be greatly enhanced.

Take my word for it, then, and continue your letters; and let the censure come when it may, we are quite prepared for receiving it. These words proximate power and sufficient grace, with which we are threatened, will frighten us no longer. We have learned from the Jesuits, the Jacobins, and M. le Moine, in how many different ways they may be turned, and how little solidity there is in these new-fangled terms, to give ourselves any trouble about them. Meanwhile, I remain, &c.

LETTER III



Paris, February 9, 1658

SIR,

I have just received your letter; and, at the same time, there was brought me a copy of the censure in manuscript. I find that I am as well treated in the former as M. Arnauld is ill treated in the latter. I am afraid there is some extravagance in both cases and that neither of us is sufficiently well known by our judges. Sure I am that, were we better known, M. Arnauld would merit the approval of the Sorbonne, and I the censure of the Academy. Thus our interests are quite at variance with each other. It is his interest to make himself known, to vindicate his innocence; whereas it is mine to remain in the dark, for fear of forfeiting my reputation. Prevented, therefore, from showing my face, I must devolve on you the task of making my acknowledgments to my illustrious admirers, while I undertake that of furnishing you with the news of the censure.

I assure you, sir, it has filled me with astonishment. I expected to find it condemning the most shocking heresy in the world, but your wonder will equal mine, when informed that these alarming preparations, when on the point of producing the grand effect anticipated, have all ended in smoke.

To understand the whole affair in a pleasant way, only recollect, I beseech you, the strange impressions which, for a long time past, we have been taught to form of the Jansenists. Recall to mind the cabals, the factions, the errors, the schisms, the outrages, with which they have been so long charged; the manner in which they have been denounced and vilified from the pulpit and the press; and the degree to which this torrent of abuse, so remarkable for its violence and duration, has swollen of late years, when they have been openly and publicly accused of

being not only heretics and schismatics, but apostates and infidels- with “denying the mystery of transubstantiation, and renouncing Jesus Christ and the Gospel.”

After having published these startling accusations, it was resolved to examine their writings, in order to pronounce judgement on them. For this purpose the second letter of M. Arnauld, which was reported to be full of the greatest errors, is selected. The examiners appointed are his most open and avowed enemies. They employ all their learning to discover something that they might lay hold upon, and at length they produce one proposition of a doctrinal character, which they exhibit for censure.

What else could any one infer from such proceedings than that this proposition, selected under such remarkable circumstances, would contain the essence of the blackest heresies imaginable. And yet the proposition so entirely agrees with what is clearly and formally expressed in the passages from the fathers quoted by M. Arnauld that I have not met with a single individual who could comprehend the difference between them. Still, however, it might be imagined that there was a very great difference; for the passages from the fathers being unquestionably Catholic, the proposition of M. Arnauld, if heretical, must be widely opposed to them.

Such was the difficulty which the Sorbonne was expected to clear up. All Christendom waited, with wide-opened eyes, to discover, in the censure of these learned doctors, the point of difference which had proved imperceptible to ordinary mortals. Meanwhile M. Arnauld gave in his defences, placing his own proposition and the passages of the fathers from which he had drawn it in parallel columns, so as to make the agreement between them apparent to the most obtuse understandings.

He shows, for example, that St. Augustine says in one passage that “Jesus Christ points out to us, in the person of St. Peter, a righteous man warning us by his fall to avoid presumption.” He cites another passage from the same father, in which he says “that God, in order to show us that without grace we can do nothing, left St. Peter without grace.” He produces a third, from St. Chrysostom,

who says, “that the fall of St. Peter happened, not through any coldness towards Jesus Christ, but because grace failed him; and that he fell, not so much through his own negligence as through the withdrawment of God, as a lesson to the whole Church, that without God we can do nothing.” He then gives his own accused proposition, which is as follows: “The fathers point out to us, in the person of St. Peter, a righteous man to whom that grace without which we can do nothing was wanting.”

In vain did people attempt to discover how it could possibly be that M. Arnauld’s expression differed from those of the fathers as much as the truth from error and faith from heresy. For where was the difference to be found? Could it be in these words: “that the fathers point out to us, in the person of St. Peter, a righteous man”? St. Augustine has said the same thing in so many words. Is it because he says “that grace had failed him”? The same St. Augustine who had said that “St. Peter was a righteous man,” says “that he had not had grace on that occasion.” Is it, then, for his having said “that without grace we can do nothing”? Why, is not this just what St. Augustine says in the same place, and what St. Chrysostom had said before him, with this difference only, that he expresses it in much stronger language, as when he says “that his fall did not happen through his own coldness or negligence, but through the failure of grace, and the withdrawment of God”?

Such considerations as these kept everybody in a state of breathless suspense to learn in what this diversity could consist, when at length, after a great many meetings, this famous and long-looked-for censure made its appearance. But, alas! it has sadly baulked our expectation. Whether it be that the Molinist doctors would not condescend so far as to enlighten us on the point, or for some other mysterious reason, the fact is they have done nothing more than pronounce these words: “This proposition is rash, impious, blasphemous, accursed, and heretical!”

Would you believe it, sir, that most people, finding themselves deceived in their expectations, have got into bad humor, and begin to fall foul upon the censors themselves? They are drawing strange inferences from their conduct in

favour of M. Arnauld's innocence. "What!" they are saying, "is this all that could be achieved, during all this time, by so many doctors joining in a furious attack on one individual? Can they find nothing in all his works worthy of reprehension, but three lines, and these extracted, word for word, from the greatest doctors of the Greek and Latin Churches? Is there any author whatever whose writings, were it intended to ruin him, would not furnish a more specious pretext for the purpose? And what higher proof could be furnished of the orthodoxy of this illustrious accused?

"How comes it to pass," they add, "that so many denunciations are launched in this censure, into which they have crowded such terms as 'poison, pestilence, horror, rashness, impiety, blasphemy, abomination, execration, anathema, heresy'- the most dreadful epithets that could be used against Arius, or Antichrist himself; and all to combat an imperceptible heresy, and that, moreover, without telling as what it is? If it be against the words of the fathers that they inveigh in this style, where is the faith and tradition? If against M. Arnauld's proposition, let them point out the difference between the two; for we can see nothing but the most perfect harmony between them. As soon as we have discovered the evil of the proposition, we shall hold it in abhorrence; but so long as we do not see it, or rather see nothing in the statement but the sentiments of the holy fathers, conceived and expressed in their own terms, how can we possibly regard it with any other feelings than those of holy veneration?"

Such is the specimen of the way in which they are giving vent to their feelings. But these are by far too deep-thinking people. You and I, who make no pretensions to such extraordinary penetration, may keep ourselves quite easy about the whole affair. What! would we be wiser than our masters? No: let us take example from them, and not undertake what they have not ventured upon. We would be sure to get boggled in such an attempt. Why it would be the easiest thing imaginable, to render this censure itself heretical. Truth, we know, is so delicate that, if we make the slightest deviation from it, we fall into error; but this alleged error is so extremely finespun that, if we diverge from it in the slightest

degree, we fall back upon the truth. There is positively nothing between this obnoxious proposition and the truth but an imperceptible point. The distance between them is so impalpable that I was in terror lest, from pure inability to perceive it, I might, in my over-anxiety to agree with the doctors of the Sorbonne, place myself in opposition to the doctors of the Church. Under this apprehension, I judged it expedient to consult one of those who, through policy, was neutral on the first question, that from him I might learn the real state of the matter. I have accordingly had an interview with one of the most intelligent of that party, whom I requested to point out to me the difference between the two things, at the same time frankly owning to him that I could see none.

He appeared to be amused at my simplicity and replied, with a smile: “How simple it is in you to believe that there is any difference! Why, where could it be? Do you imagine that, if they could have found out any discrepancy between M. Arnauld and the fathers, they would not have boldly pointed it out and been delighted with the opportunity of exposing it before the public, in whose eyes they are so anxious to depreciate that gentleman?”

I could easily perceive, from these few words, that those who had been neutral on the first question would not all prove so on the second; but, anxious to hear his reasons, I asked: “Why, then, have they attacked this unfortunate proposition?”

“Is it possible,” he replied, “you can be ignorant of these two things, which I thought had been known to the veriest tyro in these matters? that, on the one hand, M. Arnauld has uniformly avoided advancing a single tenet which is not powerfully supported by the tradition of the Church; and that, on the other hand, his enemies have determined, cost what it may, to cut that ground from under him; and, accordingly, that as the writings of the former afforded no handle to the designs of the latter, they have been obliged, in order to satiate their revenge, to seize on some proposition, it mattered not what, and to condemn it without telling why or wherefore. Do not you know how the keep them in check, and annoy them so desperately that they cannot drop the slightest word against the principles of the fathers without being incontinently overwhelmed with whole volumes, under

the pressure of which they are forced to succumb? So that, after a great many proofs of their weakness, they have judged it more to the purpose, and much less troublesome, to censure than to reply- it being a much easier matter with them to find monks than reasons."

"Why then," said I, "if this be the case, their censure is not worth a straw; for who will pay any regard to it, when they see it to be without foundation, and refuted, as it no doubt will be, by the answers given to it?"

"If you knew the temper of people," replied my friend the doctor, "you would talk in another sort of way. Their censure, censurable as it is, will produce nearly all its designed effect for a time; and although, by the force of demonstration, it is certain that, in course of time, its invalidity will be made apparent, it is equally true that, at first, it will tell as effectually on the minds of most people as if it had been the most righteous sentence in the world. Let it only be cried about the streets: 'Here you have the censure of M. Arnauld!- here you have the condemnation of the Jansenists!' and the Jesuits will find their account in it. How few will ever read it! How few, of them who do read, will understand it! How few will observe that it answers no objections! How few will take the matter to heart, or attempt to sift it to the bottom! Mark, then, how much advantage this gives to the enemies of the Jansenists. They are sure to make a triumph of it, though a vain one, as usual, for some months at least- and that is a great matter for them, they will look out afterwards for some new means of subsistence. They live from hand to mouth, sir. It is in this way they have contrived to maintain themselves down to the present day. Sometimes it is by a catechism in which a child is made to condemn their opponents; then it is by a procession, in which sufficient grace leads the efficacious in triumph; again it is by a comedy, in which Jansenius is represented as carried off by devils; at another time it is by an almanac; and now it is by this censure."

"In good sooth," said I "I was on the point of finding fault with the conduct of the Molinists; but after what you have told me, I must say I admire their prudence

and their policy. I see perfectly well that they could not have followed a safer or more Judicious course."

"You are right," returned he; "their safest policy has always been to keep silent; and this led a certain learned divine to remark, 'that the cleverest among them are those who intrigue much, speak little, and write nothing.'

"It is on this principle that, from the commencement of the meetings, they prudently ordained that, if M. Arnauld came into the Sorbonne, it must be simply to explain what he believed, and not to enter the lists of controversy with any one. The examiners, having ventured to depart a little from this prudent arrangement, suffered for their temerity. They found themselves rather too vigourously refuted by his second apology.

"On the same principle, they had recourse to that rare and very novel device of the half-hour and the sand-glass. By this means they rid themselves of the importunity of those troublesome doctors, who might undertake to refute all their arguments, to produce books which might convict them of forgery, to insist on a reply, and reduce them to the predicament of having none to give.

"It is not that they were so blind as not to see that this encroachment on liberty, which has induced so many doctors to withdraw from the meetings, would do no good to their censure; and that the protest of nullity, taken on this ground by M. Arnauld before it was concluded, would be a bad preamble for securing it a favourable reception. They know very well that unprejudiced persons place fully as much weight on the judgement of seventy doctors, who had nothing to gain by defending M. Arnauld, as on that of a hundred others who had nothing to lose by condemning him. But, upon the whole, they considered that it would be of vast importance to have a censure, although it should be the act of a party only in the Sorbonne, and not of the whole body; although it should be carried with little or no freedom of debate and obtained by a great many small manoeuvres not exactly according to order; although it should give no explanation of the matter in dispute; although it should not point out in what this heresy consists, and should say as little as possible about it, for fear of committing a mistake. This very

silence is a mystery in the eyes of the simple; and the censure will reap this singular advantage from it, that they may defy the most critical and subtle theologians to find in it a single weak argument.

"Keep yourself easy, then, and do not be afraid of being set down as a heretic, though you should make use of the condemned proposition. It is bad, I assure you, only as occurring in the second letter of M. Arnauld. If you will not believe this statement on my word, I refer you to M. le Moine, the most zealous of the examiners, who, in the course of conversation with a doctor of my acquaintance this very morning, on being asked by him where lay the point of difference in dispute, and if one would no longer be allowed to say what the fathers had said before him, made the following exquisite reply: 'This proposition would be orthodox in the mouth of any other- it is only as coming from M. Arnauld that the Sorbonne has condemned it!' You must now be prepared to admire the machinery of Molinism, which can produce such prodigious overturnings in the Church- that what is Catholic in the fathers becomes heretical in M. Arnauld- that what is heretical in the Semi-Pelagians becomes orthodox in the writings of the Jesuits; the ancient doctrine of St. Augustine becomes an intolerable innovation, and new inventions, daily fabricated before our eyes, pass for the ancient faith of the Church." So saying, he took his leave of me.

This information has satisfied my purpose. I gather from it that this same heresy is one of an entirely new species. It is not the sentiments of M. Arnauld that are heretical; it is only his person. This is a personal heresy. He is not a heretic for anything he has said or written, but simply because he is M. Arnauld. This is all they have to say against him. Do what he may, unless he cease to be, he will never be a good Catholic. The grace of St. Augustine will never be the true grace, so long as he continues to defend it. It would become so at once, were he to take it into his head to impugn it. That would be a sure stroke, and almost the only plan for establishing the truth and demolishing Molinism; such is the fatality attending all the opinions which he embraces.

Let us leave them, then, to settle their own differences. These are the disputes of theologians, not of theology. We, who are no doctors, have nothing to do with their quarrels. Tell our friends the news of the censure, and love me while I am, &c.

LETTER IV



Paris, February 25, 1656

SIR,

Nothing can come up to the Jesuits. I have seen Jacobins, doctors, and all sorts of people in my day, but such an interview as I have just had was wanting to complete my knowledge of mankind. Other men are merely copies of them. As things are always found best at the fountainhead, I paid a visit to one of the ablest among them, in company with my trusty Jansenist- the same who accompanied me to the Dominicans. Being particularly anxious to learn something of a dispute which they have with the Jansenists about what they call actual grace, I said to the worthy father that I would be much obliged to him if he would instruct me on this point- that I did not even know what the term meant and would thank him to explain it. "With all my heart," the Jesuit replied; "for I dearly love inquisitive people. Actual grace, according to our definition, 'is an inspiration of God, whereby He makes us to know His will and excites within us a desire to perform it.'"

"And where," said I, "lies your difference with the Jansenists on this subject?"

"The difference lies here," he replied; "we hold that God bestows actual grace on all men in every case of temptation; for we maintain that unless a person have, whenever tempted, actual grace to keep him from sinning, his sin, whatever it may be, can never be imputed to him. The Jansenists, on the other hand, affirm that sins, though committed without actual grace, are, nevertheless, imputed; but they are a pack of fools." I got a glimpse of his meaning; but, to obtain from him a fuller explanation, I observed: "My dear father, it is that phrase actual grace that puzzles me; I am quite a stranger to it, and if you would have the goodness to tell

me the same thing over again, without employing that term, you would infinitely oblige me."

"Very good," returned the father; "that is to say, you want me to substitute the definition in place of the thing defined; that makes no alteration of the sense; I have no objections. We maintain it, then, as an undeniable principle, that an action cannot be imputed as a sin, unless God bestow on us, before committing it, the knowledge of the evil that is in the action, and an inspiration inciting us to avoid it. Do you understand me now?"

Astonished at such a declaration, according to which, no sins of surprise, nor any of those committed in entire forgetfulness of God, could be imputed, I turned round to my friend the Jansenist and easily discovered from his looks that he was of a different way of thinking. But as he did not utter a word, I said to the monk, "I would fain wish, my dear father, to think that what you have now said is true, and that you have good proofs for it."

"Proofs, say you!" he instantly exclaimed: "I shall furnish you with these very soon, and the very best sort too; let me alone for that."

So saying, he went in search of his books, and I took this opportunity of asking my friend if there was any other person who talked in this manner? "Is this so strange to you?" he replied. "You may depend upon it that neither the fathers, nor the popes, nor councils, nor Scripture, nor any book of devotion employ such language; but, if you wish casuists and modern schoolmen, he will bring you a goodly number of them on his side." "O! but I care not a fig about these authors, if they are contrary to tradition," I said. "You are right," he replied.

As he spoke, the good father entered the room, laden with books; and presenting to me the first that came to hand. "Read that," he said; "this is The Summary of Sins, by Father Bauny- the fifth edition too, you see, which shows that it is a good book."

"It is a pity, however," whispered the Jansenist in my ear, "that this same book has been condemned at Rome, and by the bishops of France."

“Look at page 906,” said the father. I did so and read as follows: “In order to sin and become culpable in the sight of God, it is necessary to know that the thing we wish to do is not good, or at least to doubt that it is- to fear or to judge that God takes no pleasure in the action which we contemplate, but forbids it; and in spite of this, to commit the deed, leap the fence, and transgress.”

“This is a good commencement,” I remarked. “And yet,” said he, “mark how far envy will carry some people. It was on that very passage that M. Hallier, before he became one of our friends, bantered Father Bauny, by applying to him these words: Ecce qui tollit peccata mundi- ‘Behold the man that taketh away the sins of the world!’”

“Certainly,” said I, “according to Father Bauny, we may be said to behold a redemption of an entirely new description.”

“Would you have a more authentic witness on the point?” added he. “Here is the book of Father Annat. It is the last that he wrote against M. Arnauld. Turn up to page 34, where there is a dog’s ear, and read the lines which I have marked with pencil- they ought to be written in letters of gold.” I then read these words: “He that has no thought of God, nor of his sins, nor any apprehension (that is, as he explained it, any knowledge) of his obligation to exercise the acts of love to God or contrition, has no actual grace for exercising those acts; but it is equally true that he is guilty of no sin in omitting them, and that, if he is damned, it will not be as a punishment for that omission.” And a few lines below, he adds: “The same thing may be said of a culpable commission.”

“You see,” said the monk, “how he speaks of sins of omission and of commission. Nothing escapes him. What say you to that?”

“Say!” I exclaimed. “I am delighted! What a charming train of consequences do I discover flowing from this doctrine! I can see the whole results already; and such mysteries present themselves before me! Why, I see more people, beyond all comparison, justified by this ignorance and forgetfulness of God, than by grace and the sacraments! But, my dear father, are you not inspiring me with a delusive joy? Are you sure there is nothing here like that sufficiency which suffices not? I

am terribly afraid of the Distinguo; I was taken in with that once already! Are you quite in earnest?"

"How now!" cried the monk, beginning to get angry, "here is no matter for jesting. I assure you there is no such thing as equivocation here."

"I am not making a jest of it, said I; "but that is what I really dread, from pure anxiety to find it true."

"Well then," he said, "to assure yourself still more of it, here are the writings of M. le Moine, who taught the doctrine in a full meeting of the Sorbonne. He learned it from us, to be sure; but he has the merit of having cleared it up most admirably. O how circumstantially he goes to work! He shows that, in order to make out action to be a sin, all these things must have passed through the mind. Read, and weigh every word." I then read what I now give you in a translation from the original Latin: "1. On the one hand, God sheds abroad on the soul some measure of love, which gives it a bias toward the thing commanded; and on the other, a rebellious concupiscence solicits it in the opposite direction. 2. God inspires the soul with a knowledge of its own weakness. 3. God reveals the knowledge of the physician who can heal it. 4. God inspires it with a desire to be healed. 5. God inspires a desire to pray and solicit his assistance."

"And unless all these things occur and pass through the soul," added the monk, "the action is not properly a sin, and cannot be imputed, as M. le Moine shows in the same place and in what follows. Would you wish to have other authorities for this? Here they are."

"All modern ones, however," whispered my Jansenist friend.

"So I perceive," said I to him aside; and then, turning to the monk: "O my dear sir," cried I, "what a blessing this will be to some persons of my acquaintance! I must positively introduce them to you. You have never, perhaps, met with people who had fewer sins to account for all your life. For, in the first place, they never think of God at all; their vices have got the better of their reason; they have never known either their weakness or the physician who can cure it; they have never thought of 'desiring the health of their soul,' and still less of 'praying to God to

bestow it'; so that, according to M. le Moine, they are still in the state of baptismal innocence. They have 'never had a thought of loving God or of being contrite for their sins'; so that, according to Father Annat, they have never committed sin through the want of charity and penitence. Their life is spent in a perpetual round of all sorts of pleasures, in the course of which they have not been interrupted by the slightest remorse. These excesses had led me to imagine that their perdition was inevitable; but you, father, inform me that these same excesses secure their salvation. Blessings on you, my good father, for this way of justifying people! Others prescribe painful austerities for healing the soul; but you show that souls which may be thought desperately distempered are in quite good health. What an excellent device for being happy both in this world and in the next! I had always supposed that the less a man thought of God, the more he sinned; but, from what I see now, if one could only succeed in bringing himself not to think upon God at all, everything would be pure with him in all time coming. Away with your half-and-half sinners, who retain some sneaking affection for virtue! They will be damned every one of them, these semi-sinners. But commend me to your arrant sinners- hardened, unalloyed, out-and-out, thorough-bred sinners. Hell is no place for them; they have cheated the devil, purely by virtue of their devotion to his service!"

The good father, who saw very well the connection between these consequences and his principle, dexterously evaded them; and, maintaining his temper, either from good nature or policy, he merely replied: "To let you understand how we avoid these inconveniences, you must know that, while we affirm that these reprobates to whom you refer would be without sin if they had no thoughts of conversion and no desires to devote themselves to God, we maintain that they all actually have such thoughts and desires, and that God never permitted a man to sin without giving him previously a view of the evil which he contemplated, and a desire, either to avoid the offence, or at all events to implore his aid to enable him to avoid it; and none but Jansenists will assert the contrary."

“Strange! father,” returned I; “is this, then, the heresy of the Jansenists, to deny that every time a man commits a sin he is troubled with a remorse of conscience, in spite of which, he ‘leaps the fence and transgresses,’ as Father Bauny has it? It is rather too good a joke to be made a heretic for that. I can easily believe that a man may be damned for not having good thoughts; but it never would have entered my head to imagine that any man could be subjected to that doom for not believing that all mankind must have good thoughts! But, father, I hold myself bound in conscience to disabuse you and to inform you that there are thousands of people who have no such desires- who sin without regret- who sin with delight- who make a boast of sinning. And who ought to know better about these things than yourself.? You cannot have failed to have confessed some of those to whom I allude; for it is among persons of high rank that they are most generally to be met with. But mark, father, the dangerous consequences of your maxim. Do you not perceive what effect it may have on those libertines who like nothing better than to find out matter of doubt in religion? What a handle do you give them, when you assure them, as an article of faith, that, on every occasion when they commit a sin, they feel an inward presentiment of the evil and a desire to avoid it? Is it not obvious that, feeling convinced by their own experience of the falsity of your doctrine on this point, which you say is a matter of faith, they will extend the inference drawn from this to all the other points? They will argue that, since you are not trustworthy in one article, you are to be suspected in them all; and thus you shut them up to conclude either that religion is false or that you must know very little about it.”

Here my friend the Jansenist, following up my remarks, said to him: “You would do well, father, if you wish to preserve your doctrine, not to explain so precisely as you have done to us what you mean by actual grace. For, how could you, without forfeiting all credit in the estimation of men, openly declare that nobody sins without having previously the knowledge of his weakness, and of a physician, or the desire of a cure, and of asking it of God? Will it be believed, on your word, that those who are immersed in avarice, impurity, blasphemy,

duelling, revenge, robbery and sacrilege, have really a desire to embrace chastity, humility, and the other Christian virtues? Can it be conceived that those philosophers who boasted so loudly of the powers of nature, knew its infirmity and its physician? Will you maintain that those who held it as a settled maxim that is not God that bestows virtue, and that no one ever asked it from him,' would think of asking it for themselves? Who can believe that the Epicureans, who denied a divine providence, ever felt any inclination to pray to God? men who said that 'it would be an insult to invoke the Deity in our necessities, as if he were capable of wasting a thought on beings like us?' In a word, how can it be imagined that idolaters and atheists, every time they are tempted to the commission of sin, in other words, infinitely often during their lives, have a desire to pray to the true God, of whom they are ignorant, that he would bestow on them virtues of which they have no conception?"

"Yes," said the worthy monk, in a resolute tone, "we will affirm it: and sooner than allow that any one sins without having the consciousness that he is doing evil, and the desire of the opposite virtue, we will maintain that the whole world, reprobates and infidels included, have these inspirations and desires in every case of temptation. You cannot show me, from the Scripture at least, that this is not the truth."

On this remark I struck in, by exclaiming: "What! father, must we have recourse to the Scripture to demonstrate a thing so clear as this? This is not a point of faith, nor even of reason. It is a matter of fact: we see it- we know it- we feel it."

But the Jansenist, keeping the monk to his own terms, addressed him as follows: "If you are willing, father, to stand or fall by Scripture, I am ready to meet you there; only you must promise to yield to its authority; and, since it is written that 'God has not revealed his judgements to the Heathen, but left them to wander in their own ways,' you must not say that God has enlightened those whom the Sacred Writings assure us 'he has left in darkness and in the shadow of death.' Is it not enough to show the erroneousness of your principle, to find that

St. Paul calls himself ‘the chief of sinners,’ for a sin which he committed ‘ignorantly, and with zeal’? Is it not enough, to and from the Gospel, that those who crucified Jesus Christ had need of the pardon which he asked for them, although they knew not the malice of their action, and would never have committed it, according to St. Paul, if they had known it? Is it not enough that Jesus Christ apprises us that there will be persecutors of the Church, who, while making every effort to ruin her, will ‘think that they are doing God service’; teaching us that this sin, which in the judgement of the apostle, is the greatest of all sins, may be committed by persons who, so far from knowing that they were sinning, would think that they sinned by not committing it? In fine, it is not enough that Jesus Christ himself has taught us that there are two kinds of sinners, the one of whom sin with ‘knowledge of their Master’s will,’ and the other without knowledge; and that both of them will be ‘chastised,’ although, indeed, in a different manner?”

Sorely pressed by so many testimonies from Scripture, to which he had appealed, the worthy monk began to give way; and, leaving the wicked to sin without inspiration, he said: “You will not deny that good men, at least, never sin unless God give them”- “You are flinching,” said I, interrupting him; “you are flinching now, my good father; you abandon the general principle, and, finding that it will not hold good in regard to the wicked, you would compound the matter, by making it apply at least to the righteous. But in this point of view the application of it is, I conceive, so circumscribed that it will hardly apply to anybody, and it is scarcely worth while to dispute the point.”

My friend, however, who was so ready on the whole question, that I am inclined to think he had studied it all that very morning, replied: “This, father, is the last entrenchment to which those of your party who are willing to reason at all are sure to retreat; but you are far from being safe even here. The example of the saints is not a whit more in your favour. Who doubts that they often fall into sins of surprise, without being conscious of them? Do we not learn from the saints themselves how often concupiscence lays hidden snares for them; and how

generally it happens, as St. Augustine complains of himself in his Confessions, that, with all their discretion, they ‘give to pleasure what they mean only to give to necessity’?

“How usual is it to see the more zealous friends of truth betrayed by the heat of controversy into sallies of bitter passion for their personal interests, while their consciences, at the time, bear them no other testimony than that they are acting in this manner purely for the interests of truth, and they do not discover their mistake till long afterwards!

“What, again, shall we say of those who, as we learn from examples in ecclesiastical history, eagerly involve themselves in affairs which are really bad, because they believe them to be really good; and yet this does not hinder the fathers from condemning such persons as having sinned on these occasions?

“And were this not the case, how could the saints have their secret faults? How could it be true that God alone knows the magnitude and the number of our offences; that no one knows whether he is worthy of hatred or love; and that the best of saints, though unconscious of any culpability, ought always, as St. Paul says of himself, to remain in ‘fear and trembling’?

“You perceive, then, father, that this knowledge of the evil and love of the opposite virtue, which you imagine to be essential to constitute sin, are equally disproved by the examples of the righteous and of the wicked. In the case of the wicked, their passion for vice sufficiently testifies that they have no desire for virtue; and in regard to the righteous, the love which they bear to virtue plainly shows that they are not always conscious of those sins which, as the Scripture teaches, they are daily committing.

“So true is it, indeed, that the righteous often sin through ignorance, that the greatest saints rarely sin otherwise. For how can it be supposed that souls so pure, who avoid with so much care and zeal the least things that can be displeasing to God as soon as they discover them, and who yet sin many times every day, could possibly have every time before they fell into sin, ‘the knowledge of their infirmity on that occasion, and of their physician, and the desire of their souls’

health, and of praying to God for assistance,' and that, in spite of these inspirations, these devoted souls 'nevertheless transgress,' and commit the sin?

"You must conclude then, father, that neither sinners nor yet saints have always that knowledge, or those desires and inspirations, every time they offend; that is, to use your own terms, they have not always actual grace. Say no longer, with your modern authors, that it is impossible for those to sin who do not know righteousness; but rather join with St. Augustine and the ancient fathers in saying that it is impossible not to sin, when we do not know righteousness: Necesse est ut peccet, a quo ignoratur justilia."

The good father, though thus driven from both of his positions, did not lose courage, but after ruminating a little, "Ha!" he exclaimed, "I shall convince you immediately." And again taking up Father Bauny, he pointed to the same place he had before quoted, exclaiming, "Look now- see the ground on which he establishes his opinion! I was sure he would not be deficient in good proofs. Read what he quotes from Aristotle, and you will see that, after so express an authority, you must either burn the books of this prince of philosophers or adopt our opinion. Hear, then, the principles which support Father Bauny: Aristotle states first, 'that an action cannot be imputed as blameworthy, if it be involuntary.'"

"I grant that," said my friend.

"This is the first time you have agreed together," said I. "Take my advice, father, and proceed no further."

"That would be doing nothing," he replied; "we must know what are the conditions necessary to constitute an action voluntary."

"I am much afraid," returned I, "that you will get at loggerheads on that point."

"No fear of that," said he; "this is sure ground- Aristotle is on my side. Hear now, what Father Bauny says: 'In order that an action be voluntary, it must proceed from a man who perceives, knows, and comprehends what is good and what is evil in it. Voluntarium est- that is a voluntary action, as we commonly say with the philosopher' (that is Aristotle, you know, said the monk, squeezing my hand); 'quod fit a principio cognoscente singula in quibus est actio- which is done

by a person knowing the particulars of the action; so that when the will is led inconsiderately, and without mature reflection, to embrace or reject, to do or omit to do anything, before the understanding has been able to see whether it would be right or wrong, such an action is neither good nor evil; because previous to this mental inquisition, view, and reflection on the good or bad qualities of the matter in question, the act by which it is done is not voluntary.' Are you satisfied now?" said the father.

"It appears," returned I, "that Aristotle agrees with Father Bauny; but that does not prevent me from feeling surprised at this statement. What, sir! is it not enough to make an action voluntary that the man knows what he is doing, and does it just because he chooses to do it? Must we suppose, besides this, that he 'perceives, knows, and comprehends what is good and evil in the action'? Why, on this supposition there would be hardly such a thing in nature as voluntary actions, for no one scarcely thinks about all this. How many oaths in gambling, how many excesses in debauchery, how many riotous extravagances in the carnival, must, on this principle, be excluded from the list of voluntary actions, and consequently neither good nor bad, because not accompanied by those 'mental reflections on the good and evil qualities' of the action? But is it possible, father, that Aristotle held such a sentiment? I have always understood that he was a sensible man."

"I shall soon convince you of that, said the Jansenist, and requesting a sight of Aristotle's Ethics, he opened it at the beginning of the third book, from which Father Bauny had taken the passage quoted, and said to the monk: "I excuse you, my dear sir, for having believed, on the word of Father Bauny, that Aristotle held such a sentiment; but you would have changed your mind had you read him for yourself. It is true that he teaches, that 'in order to make an action voluntary, we must know the particulars of that action'- singula in quibus est actio. But what else does he means by that, than the circumstances of the action? The examples which he adduces clearly show this to be his meaning, for they are exclusively confined to cases in which the persons were ignorant of some of the circumstances; such as that of 'a person who, wishing to exhibit a machine,

discharges a dart which wounds a bystander; and that of Merope, who killed her own son instead of her enemy,' and such like.

"Thus you see what is the kind of ignorance that renders actions involuntary; namely, that of the particular circumstances, which is termed by divines, as you must know, ignorance of the fact. But with respect to ignorance of the right- ignorance of the good or evil in an action- which is the only point in question, let us see if Aristotle agrees with Father Bauny. Here are the words of the philosopher: 'All wicked men are ignorant of what they ought to do, and what they ought to avoid; and it is this very ignorance which makes them wicked and vicious. Accordingly, a man cannot be said to act involuntarily merely because he is ignorant of what it is proper for him to do in order to fulfil his duty. This ignorance in the choice of good and evil does not make the action involuntary; it only makes it vicious. The same thing may be affirmed of the man who is ignorant generally of the rules of his duty; such ignorance is worthy of blame, not of excuse. And consequently, the ignorance which renders actions involuntary and excusable is simply that which relates to the fact and its particular circumstances. In this case the person is excused and forgiven, being considered as having acted contrary to his inclination.'

"After this, father, will you maintain that Aristotle is of your opinion? And who can help being astonished to find that a Pagan philosopher had more enlightened views than your doctors, in a matter so deeply affecting morals, and the direction of conscience, too, as the knowledge of those conditions which render actions voluntary or involuntary, and which, accordingly, charge or discharge them as sinful? Look for no more support, then, father, from the prince of philosophers, and no longer oppose yourselves to the prince of theologians, who has thus decided the point in the first book of his Retractations, chapter xv: 'Those who sin through ignorance, though they sin without meaning to sin, commit the deed only because they will commit it. And, therefore, even this sin of ignorance cannot be committed except by the will of him who commits it, though by a will which incites him to the action merely, and not to the sin; and yet the action itself is

nevertheless sinful, for it is enough to constitute it such that he has done what he was bound not to do.’”

The Jesuit seemed to be confounded more with the passage from Aristotle, I thought, than that from St. Augustine; but while he was thinking on what he could reply, a messenger came to inform him that Madame la Marechale of- , and Madame the Marchioness of- , requested his attendance. So, taking a hasty leave of us, he said: “I shall speak about it to our fathers. They will find an answer to it, I warrant you; we have got some long heads among us.”

We understood him perfectly well; and, on our being left alone, I expressed to my friend my astonishment at the subversion which this doctrine threatened to the whole system of morals. To this he replied that he was quite astonished at my astonishment. “Are you not yet aware,” he said, “that they have gone to far greater excess in morals than in any other matter?” He gave me some strange illustrations of this, promising me more at some future time. The information which I may receive on this point will, I hope, furnish the topic of my next communication. I am, &c.

LETTER V



Paris, March 20, 1656

SIR,

According to my promise, I now send you the first outlines of the morals taught by those good fathers the Jesuits, “those men distinguished for learning and sagacity, who are all under the guidance of divine wisdom- a surer guide than all philosophy.” You imagine, perhaps, that I am in jest, but I am perfectly serious; or rather, they are so when they speak thus of themselves in their book entitled The Image of the First Century. I am only copying their own words, and may now give you the rest of the eulogy: “They are a society of men, or rather let us call them angels, predicted by Isaiah in these words, ‘Go, ye swift and ready angels.’” The prediction is as clear as day, is it not? “They have the spirit of eagles they are a flock of phoenixes (a late author having demonstrated that there are a great many of these birds); they have changed the face of Christendom!” Of course, we must believe all this, since they have said it; and in one sense you will find the account amply verified by the sequel of this communication, in which I propose to treat of their maxims.

Determined to obtain the best possible information, I did not trust to the representations of our friend the Jansenist, but sought an interview with some of themselves. I found however, that he told me nothing but the bare truth, and I am persuaded he is an honest man. Of this you may judge from the following account of these conferences.

In the conversation I had with the Jansenist, he told me so many strange things about these fathers that I could with difficulty believe them, till he pointed them out to me in their writings; after which he left me nothing more to say in their defence than that these might be the sentiments of some individuals only, which it

was not fair to impute to the whole fraternity. And, indeed, I assured him that I knew some of them who were as severe as those whom he quoted to me were lax. This led him to explain to me the spirit of the Society, which is not known to every one; and you will perhaps have no objections to learning something about it.

"You imagine," he began, "that it would tell considerably in their favour to show that some of their fathers are as friendly to Evangelical maxims as others are opposed to them; and you would conclude from that circumstance, that these loose opinions do not belong to the whole Society. That I grant you; for had such been the case, they would not have suffered persons among them holding sentiments so diametrically opposed to licentiousness. But, as it is equally true that there are among them those who hold these licentious doctrines, you are bound also to conclude that the holy Spirit of the Society is not that of Christian severity, for had such been the case, they would not have suffered persons among them holding sentiments so diametrically opposed to that severity."

"And what, then," I asked, "can be the design of the whole as a body? Perhaps they have no fixed principle, and every one is left to speak out at random whatever he thinks."

"That cannot be," returned my friend; "such an immense body could not subsist in such a haphazard sort of way, or without a soul to govern and regulate its movements; besides, it is one of their express regulations that none shall print a page without the approval of their superiors."

"But," said I, "how can these same superiors give their consent to maxims so contradictory?"

"That is what you have yet to learn," he replied. "Know then that their object is not the corruption of manners- that is not their design. But as little is it their sole aim to reform them- that would be bad policy. Their idea is briefly this: They have such a good opinion of themselves as to believe that it is useful, and in some sort essentially necessary to the good of religion, that their influence should extend everywhere, and that they should govern all consciences. And the Evangelical or

severe maxims being best fitted for managing some sorts of people, they avail themselves of these when they find them favourable to their purpose. But as these maxims do not suit the views of the great bulk of the people, they waive them in the case of such persons, in order to keep on good terms with all the world. Accordingly, having to deal with persons of all classes and of all different nations, they find it necessary to have casuists assorted to match this diversity.

"On this principle, you will easily see that, if they had none but the looser sort of casuists, they would defeat their main design, which is to embrace all; for those that are truly pious are fond of a stricter discipline. But as there are not many of that stamp, they do not require many severe directors to guide them. They have a few for the select few; while whole multitudes of lax casuists are provided for the multitudes that prefer laxity.

"It is in virtue of this 'obliging and accommodating, conduct,' as Father Petau calls it, that they may be said to stretch out a helping hand to all mankind. Should any person present himself before them, for example, fully resolved to make restitution of some ill-gotten gains, do not suppose that they would dissuade him from it. By no means; on the contrary, they would applaud and confirm him in such a holy resolution. But suppose another should come who wishes to be absolved without restitution, and it will be a particularly hard case indeed, if they cannot furnish him with means of evading the duty, of one kind or another, the lawfulness of which they will be ready to guarantee.

"By this policy they keep all their friends, and defend themselves against all their foes; for when charged with extreme laxity, they have nothing more to do than produce their austere directors, with some books which they have written on the severity of the Christian code of morals; and simple people, or those who never look below the surface of things, are quite satisfied with these proofs of the falsity of the accusation.

"Thus, are they prepared for all sorts of persons, and so ready are they to suit the supply to the demand that, when they happen to be in any part of the world where the doctrine of a crucified God is accounted foolishness, they suppress the

offence of the cross and preach only a glorious and not a suffering Jesus Christ. This plan they followed in the Indies and in China, where they permitted Christians to practise idolatry itself, with the aid of the following ingenious contrivance: they made their converts conceal under their clothes an image of Jesus Christ, to which they taught them to transfer mentally those adorations which they rendered ostensibly to the idol of Cachinchoam and Keum-fucum. This charge is brought against them by Gravina, a Dominican, and is fully established by the Spanish memorial presented to Philip IV, king of Spain, by the Cordeliers of the Philippine Islands, quoted by Thomas Hurtado, in his Martyrdom of the Faith, page 427. To such a length did this practice go that the Congregation De Propaganda were obliged expressly to forbid the Jesuits, on pain of excommunication, to permit the worship of idols on any pretext whatever, or to conceal the mystery of the cross from their catechumens; strictly enjoining them to admit none to baptism who were not thus instructed, and ordering them to expose the image of the crucifix in their churches: all of which is amply detailed in the decree of that Congregation, dated the 9th of July, 1646, and signed by Cardinal Capponi.

"Such is the manner in which they have spread themselves over the whole earth, aided by the doctrine of probable opinions, which is at once the source and the basis of all this licentiousness. You must get some of themselves to explain this doctrine to you. They make no secret of it, any more than of what you have already learned; with this difference only, that they conceal their carnal and worldly policy under the garb of divine and Christian prudence; as if the faith, and tradition, its ally, were not always one and the same at all times and in all places; as if it were the part of the rule to bend in conformity to the subject which it was meant to regulate; and as if souls, to be purified from their pollutions, had only to corrupt the law of the Lord, in place of the law of the Lord, which is clean and pure, converting the soul which lieth in sin, and bringing it into conformity with its salutary lessons!

“Go and see some of these worthy fathers, I beseech you, and I am confident that you will soon discover, in the laxity of their moral system, the explanation of their doctrine about grace. You will then see the Christian virtues exhibited in such a strange aspect, so completely stripped of the charity which is the life and soul of them, you will see so many crimes palliated and irregularities tolerated that you will no longer be surprised at their maintaining that ‘all men have always enough of grace’ to lead a pious life, in the sense of which they understand piety. Their morality being entirely Pagan, nature is quite competent to its observance. When we maintain the necessity of efficacious grace, we assign it another sort of virtue for its object. Its office is not to cure one vice by means of another; it is not merely to induce men to practise the external duties of religion: it aims at a virtue higher than that propounded by Pharisees, or the greatest sages of Heathenism. The law and reason are ‘sufficient graces’ for these purposes. But to disenthral the soul from the love of the world- to tear it from what it holds most dear- to make it die to itself- to lift it up and bind it wholly, only, and forever, to God can be the work of none but an all-powerful hand. And it would be as absurd to affirm that we have the full power of achieving such objects, as it would be to allege that those virtues, devoid of the love of God, which these fathers confound with the virtues of Christianity, are beyond our power.”

Such was the strain of my friend’s discourse, which was delivered with much feeling; for he takes these sad disorders very much to heart. For my own part, I began to entertain a high admiration for these fathers, simply on account of the ingenuity of their policy; and, following his advice, I waited on a good casuist of the Society, one of my old acquaintances, with whom I now resolved purposely to renew my former intimacy. Having my instructions how to manage them, I had no great difficulty in getting him afloat. Retaining his old attachment, he received me immediately with a profusion of kindness; and, after talking over some indifferent matters, I took occasion from the present season to learn something from him about fasting and, thus, slip insensibly into the main subject. I told him, therefore, that I had difficulty in supporting the fast. He exhorted me to do violence to my

inclinations; but, as I continued to murmur, he took pity on me and began to search out some ground for a dispensation. In fact he suggested a number of excuses for me, none of which happened to suit my case, till at length he bethought himself of asking me whether I did not find it difficult to sleep without taking supper. “Yes, my good father,” said I; “and for that reason I am obliged often to take a refreshment at mid-day and supper at night.”

“I am extremely happy,” he replied, “to have found out a way of relieving you without sin: go in peace- you are under no obligation to fast. However, I would not have you depend on my word: step this way to the library.”

On going thither with me he took up a book, exclaiming with great rapture, “Here is the authority for you: and, by my conscience, such an authority! It is Escobar!”

“Who is Escobar?” I inquired.

“What! not know Escobar! “ cried the monk; “the member of our Society who compiled this Moral Theology from twenty-four of our fathers, and on this founds an analogy, in his preface, between his book and ‘that in the Apocalypse which was sealed with seven seals,’ and states that ‘Jesus presents it thus sealed to the four living creatures, Suarez, Vasquez, Molina, and Valencia, in presence of the four-and-twenty Jesuits who represent the four-and-twenty elders.’”

He read me, in fact, the whole of that allegory, which he pronounced to be admirably appropriate, and which conveyed to my mind a sublime idea of the exellence of the work. At length, having sought out the passage of fasting, “Oh, here it is!” he said; “treatise I, example 13, no. 67: ‘If a man cannot sleep without taking supper, is he bound to fast? Answer: By no means!’ Will that not satisfy you?”

“Not exactly,” replied I; “for I might sustain the fast by taking my refreshment in the morning, and supping at night.”

“Listen, then, to what follows; they have provided for all that: ‘And what is to be said, if the person might make a shift with a refreshment in the morning and supping at night?’”

“That’s my case exactly.”

“‘Answer: Still he is not obliged to fast; because no person is obliged to change the order of his meals.’”

“A most excellent reason!” I exclaimed.

“But tell me, pray,” continued the monk, “do you take much wine?”

“No, my dear father,” I answered; “I cannot endure it.”

“I merely put the question,” returned he, “to apprise you that you might, without breaking the fast, take a glass or so in the morning, or whenever you felt inclined for a drop; and that is always something in the way of supporting nature. Here is the decision at the same place, no. 57: ‘May one, without breaking the fast, drink wine at any hour he pleases, and even in a large quantity? Yes, he may: and a dram of hippocrass too.’ I had no recollection of the hippocrass,” said the monk; “I must take a note of that in my memorandum-book.”

“He must be a nice man, this Escobar,” observed I.

“Oh! everybody likes him,” rejoined the father; “he has such delightful questions! Only observe this one in the same place, no. 38: ‘If a man doubt whether he is twenty-one years old, is he obliged to fast? No. But suppose I were to be twenty-one to-night an hour after midnight, and to-morrow were the fast, would I be obliged to fast to-morrow? No; for you were at liberty to eat as much as you pleased for an hour after midnight, not being till then fully twenty-one; and therefore having a right to break the fast day, you are not obliged to keep it.’”

“Well, that is vastly entertaining!” cried I.

“Oh,” rejoined the father, “it is impossible to tear one’s self away from the book: I spend whole days and nights in reading it; in fact, I do nothing else.”

The worthy monk, perceiving that I was interested, was quite delighted, and went on with his quotations. “Now,” said he, “for a taste of Filiutius, one of the four-and-twenty Jesuits: ‘Is a man who has exhausted himself any way- by profligacy, for example- obliged to fast? By no means. But if he has exhausted himself expressly to procure a dispensation from fasting, will he be held obliged?

He will not, even though he should have had that design.' There now! would you have believed that?"

"Indeed, good father, I do not believe it yet," said I. "What! is it no sin for a man not to fast when he has it in his power? And is it allowable to court occasions of committing sin, or rather, are we not bound to shun them? That would be easy enough, surely."

"Not always so," he replied; "that is just as it may happen."

"Happen, how?" cried I.

"Oh!" rejoined the monk, "so you think that if a person experience some inconvenience in avoiding the occasions of sin, he is still bound to do so? Not so thinks Father Bauny. 'Absolution,' says he, 'is not to be refused to such as continue in the proximate occasions of sin, if they are so situated that they cannot give them up without becoming the common talk of the world, or subjecting themselves to personal inconvenience.'"

"I am glad to hear it, father," I remarked; "and now that we are not obliged to avoid the occasions of sin, nothing more remains but to say that we may deliberately court them."

"Even that is occasionally permitted," added he; "the celebrated casuist, Basil Ponce, has said so, and Father Bauny quotes his sentiment with approbation in his Treatise on Penance, as follows: 'We may seek an occasion of sin directly and designedly- primo et per se- when our own or our neighbour's spiritual or temporal advantage induces us to do so.'"

"Truly," said I, "it appears to be all a dream to me, when I hear grave divines talking in this manner! Come now, my dear father, tell me conscientiously, do you hold such a sentiment as that?"

"No, indeed," said he, "I do not."

"You are speaking, then, against your conscience," continued I.

"Not at all," he replied; "I was speaking on that point not according to my own conscience, but according to that of Ponce and Father Bauny, and them you may follow with the utmost safety, for I assure you that they are able men."

“What, father! because they have put down these three lines in their books, will it therefore become allowable to court the occasions of sin? I always thought that we were bound to take the Scripture and the tradition of the Church as our only rule, and not your cauists.”

“Goodness!” cried the monk, “I declare you put me in mind of these Jansenists. Think you that Father Bauny and Basil Ponce are not able to render their opinion probable?”

“Probable won’t do for me,” said I; “I must have certainty.”

“I can easily see,” replied the good father, “that you know nothing about our doctrine of probable opinions. If you did, you would speak in another strain. Ah! my dear sir, I must really give you some instructions on this point; without knowing this, positively you can understand nothing at all. It is the foundation- the very A, B, C, of our whole moral philosophy.”

Glad to see him come to the point to which I had been drawing him on, I expressed my satisfaction and requested him to explain what was meant by a probable opinion?

“That,” he replied, “our authors will answer better than I can do. The generality of them, and, among others, our four-and-twenty elders, describe it thus: ‘An opinion is called probable when it is founded upon reasons of some consideration. Hence it may sometimes happen that a single very grave doctor may render an opinion probable.’ The reason is added: ‘For a man particularly given to study would not adhere to an opinion unless he was drawn to it by a good and sufficient reason.’”

“So it would appear,” I observed, with a smile, “that a single doctor may turn consciences round about and upside down as he pleases, and yet always land them in a safe position.”

“You must not laugh at it, sir,” returned the monk; “nor need you attempt to combat the doctrine. The Jansenists tried this; but they might have saved themselves the trouble- it is too firmly established. Hear Sanchez, one of the most famous of our fathers: ‘You may doubt, perhaps, whether the authority of a single

good and learned doctor renders an opinion probable. I answer that it does; and this is confirmed by Angelus, Sylvester, Navarre, Emanuel Sa, &c. It is proved thus: A probable opinion is one that has a considerable foundation. Now the authority of a learned and pious man is entitled to very great consideration; because (mark the reason), if the testimony of such a man has great influence in convincing us that such and such an event occurred, say at Rome, for example, why should it not have the same weight in the case of a question in morals?'"

"An odd comparison this," interrupted I, "between the concerns of the world and those of conscience!"

"Have a little patience," rejoined the monk; "Sanchez answers that in the very next sentence: 'Nor can I assent to the qualification made here by some writers, namely, that the authority of such a doctor, though sufficient in matters of human right, is not so in those of divine right. It is of vast weight in both cases.'"

"Well, father," said I, frankly, "I really cannot admire that rule. Who can assure me, considering the freedom your doctors claim to examine everything by reason, that what appears safe to one may seem so to all the rest? The diversity of judgements is so great"-

"You don't understand it," said he, interrupting me; "no doubt they are often of different sentiments, but what signifies that? Each renders his own opinion probable and safe. We all know well enough that they are far from being of the same mind; what is more, there is hardly an instance in which they ever agree. There are very few questions, indeed, in which you do not find the one saying yes and the other saying no. Still, in all these cases, each of the contrary opinions is probable. And hence Diana says on a certain subject: 'Ponce and Sanchez hold opposite views of it; but, as they are both learned men, each renders his own opinion probable.'"

"But, father," I remarked, "a person must be sadly embarrassed in choosing between them!" "Not at all," he rejoined; "he has only to follow the opinion which suits him best." "What! if the other is more probable?" "It does not signify," "And if the other is the safer?" "It does not signify," repeated the monk;

“this is made quite plain by Emanuel Sa, of our Society, in his Aphorisms: ‘A person may do what he considers allowable according to a probable opinion, though the contrary may be the safer one. The opinion of a single grave doctor is all that is requisite.’”

“And if an opinion be at once the less probable and the less safe, it is allowable to follow it,” I asked, “even in the way of rejecting one which we believe to be more probable and safe?”

“Once more, I say yes,” replied the monk. “Hear what Filiutius, that great Jesuit of Rome, says: ‘It is allowable to follow the less probable opinion, even though it be the less safe one. That is the common judgement of modern authors.’ Is not that quite clear?”

“Well, reverend father,” said I, “you have given us elbowroom, at all events! Thanks to your probable opinions, we have got liberty of conscience with a witness! And are you casuists allowed the same latitude in giving your responses?”

“Oh, yes,” said he, “we answer just as we please; or rather, I should say, just as it may please those who ask our advice. Here are our rules, taken from Fathers Layman, Vasquez, Sanchez, and the four-and-twenty worthies, in the words of Layman: ‘A doctor, on being consulted, may give an advice, not only probable according to his own opinion, but contrary to his own opinion, provided this judgement happens to be more favourable or more agreeable to the person that consults him- si forte haec favorabilior seu exoptatior sit. Nay, I go further and say that there would be nothing unreasonable in his giving those who consult him a judgement held to be probable by some learned person, even though he should be satisfied in his own mind that it is absolutely false.’”

“Well, seriously, father,” I said, “your doctrine is a most uncommonly comfortable one! Only think of being allowed to answer yes or no, just as you please! It is impossible to prize such a privilege too highly. I see now the advantage of the contrary opinions of your doctors. One of them always serves your turn, and the other never gives you any annoyance. If you do not find your

account on the one side, you fall back on the other and always land in perfect safety."

"That is quite true," he replied; "and, accordingly, we may always say with Diana, on his finding that Father Bauny was on his side, while Father Lugo was against him: Saepe premente deo, fert deus alter opem."*

- Ovid, Appendice, xiii. "If pressed by any god, we will be

delivered by another."

"I understand you," resumed I; "but a practical difficulty has just occurred to me, which is this, that supposing a person to have consulted one of your doctors and obtained from him a pretty liberal opinion, there is some danger of his getting into a scrape by meeting a confessor who takes a different view of the matter and refuses him absolution unless he recant the sentiment of the casuist. Have you not provided for such a case as that, father?"

"Can you doubt it?" he replied, "We have bound them, sir, to absolve their penitents who act according to probable opinions, under the pain of mortal sin, to secure their compliance. 'When the penitent,' says Father Bauny, 'follows a probable opinion, the confessor is bound to absolve him, though his opinion should differ from that of his penitent.'"

"But he does not say it would be a mortal sin not to absolve him" said I.

"How hasty you are!" rejoined the monk; "listen to what follows; he has expressly decided that, 'to refuse absolution to a penitent who acts according to a probable opinion is a sin which is in its nature mortal.' And, to settle that point, he cites the most illustrious of our fathers- Suarez, Vasquez, and Sanchez."

"My dear sir," said I, "that is a most prudent regulation. I see nothing to fear now. No confessor can dare to be refractory after this. Indeed, I was not aware that you had the power of issuing your orders on pain of damnation. I thought that your skill had been confined to the taking away of sins; I had no idea that it extended to the introduction of new ones. But, from what I now see, you are omnipotent."

“That is not a correct way of speaking,” rejoined the father. “We do not introduce sins; we only pay attention to them. I have had occasion to remark, two or three times during our conversation, that you are no great scholastic.”

“Be that as it may, father, you have at least answered my difficulty. But I have another to suggest. How do you manage when the Fathers of the Church happen to differ from any of your casuists?”

“You really know very little of the subject,” he replied. “The Fathers were good enough for the morality of their own times; but they lived too far back for that of the present age, which is no longer regulated by them, but by the modern casuists. On this Father Cellot, following the famous Reginald, remarks: ‘In questions of morals, the modern casuists are to be preferred to the ancient fathers, though those lived nearer to the times of the apostles.’ And following out this maxim, Diana thus decides: ‘Are beneficiaries bound to restore their revenue when guilty of mal-appropriation of it? The ancients would say yes, but the moderns say no; let us, therefore, adhere to the latter opinion, which relieves from the obligation of restitution.’”

“Delightful words these, and most comfortable they must be to a great many people!” I observed.

“We leave the fathers,” resumed the monk, “to those who deal with positive divinity. As for us, who are the directors of conscience, we read very little of them and quote only the modern casuists. There is Diana, for instance, a most voluminous writer; he has prefixed to his works a list of his authorities, which amount to two hundred and ninety-six, and the most ancient of them is only about eighty years old.”

“It would appear, then,” I remarked, “that all these have come into the world since the date of your Society?”

“Thereabouts,” he replied.

“That is to say, dear father, on your advent, St. Augustine, St. Chrysostom, St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, and all the rest, in so far as morals are concerned,

disappeared from the stage. Would you be so kind as let me know the names, at least, of those modern authors who have succeeded them?"

"A most able and renowned class of men they are," replied the monk. "Their names are: Villalobos, Conink, Llamas, Achokier, Dealkozer, Dellacruz, Veracruz, Ugolin, Tambourin, Fernandez, Martinez, Suarez, Henriquez, Vasquez, Lopez, Gomez, Sanchez, De Vechis, De Grassis, De Grassalis, De Pitigianis, De Graphaeis, Squilanti, Bizozeri, Barcola, De Bobadilla, Simanacha, Perez de Lara, Aldretta, Lorca, De Scarcia, Quaranta, Scophra, Pedrezza, Cabrezza, Bisbe, Dias, De Clavasio, Villagut, Adam a Manden, Iribarne, Binsfeld, Volfangi A Vorberg, Vosthery, Strevesdorf."

"O my dear father!" cried I, quite alarmed, "were all these people Christians?"

"How! Christians!" returned the casuist; "did I not tell you that these are the only writers by whom we now govern Christendom?"

Deeply affected as I was by this announcement, I concealed my emotion from the monk and only asked him if all these authors were Jesuits?

"No," said he; "but that is of little consequence; they have said a number of good things for all that. It is true the greater part of these same good things are extracted or copied from our authors, but we do not stand on ceremony with them on that score, more especially as they are in the constant habit of quoting our authors with applause. When Diana, for example, who does not belong to our Society, speaks of Vasquez, he calls him 'that phoenix of genius'; and he declares more than once 'that Vasquez alone is to him worth all the rest of men put together'- instar omnium. Accordingly, our fathers often make use of this good Diana; and, if you understand our doctrine of probability, you will see that this is no small help in its way. In fact, we are anxious that others besides the Jesuits would render their opinions probable, to prevent people from ascribing them all to us; for you will observe that, when any author, whoever he may be, advances a probable opinion, we are entitled, by the doctrine of probability, to adopt it if we please; and yet, if the author does not belong to our fraternity, we are not responsible for its soundness."

“I understand all that,” said I. “It is easy to see that all are welcome that come your way, except the ancient fathers; you are masters of the field, and have only to walk the course. But I foresee three or four serious difficulties and powerful barriers which will oppose your career.”

“And what are these?” cried the monk, looking quite alarmed.

“They are the Holy Scriptures,” I replied, “the popes, and the councils, whom you cannot gainsay, and who are all in the way of the Gospel.”

“Is that all?” he exclaimed; “I declare you put me in a fright. Do you imagine that we would overlook such an obvious scruple as that, or that we have not provided against it? A good idea, forsooth, to suppose that we would contradict Scripture, popes, and councils! I must convince you of your mistake; for I should be sorry you should go away with an impression that we are deficient in our respect to these authorities. You have doubtless taken up this notion from some of the opinions of our fathers, which are apparently at variance with their decisions, though in reality they are not. But to illustrate the harmony between them would require more leisure than we have at present; and, as I would not like you to retain a bad impression of us, if you agree to meet with me to-morrow, I shall clear it all up then.”

Thus ended our interview, and thus shall end my present communication, which has been long enough, besides, for one letter. I am sure you will be satisfied with it, in the prospect of what is forthcoming. I am, &c.

LETTER VI



Paris, April 10, 1656

SIR,

I mentioned, at the close of my last letter, that my good friend, the Jesuit, had promised to show me how the casuists reconcile the contrarieties between their opinions and the decisions of the popes, the councils, and the Scripture. This promise he fulfilled at our last interview, of which I shall now give you an account.

"One of the methods," resumed the monk, "in which we reconcile these apparent contradictions, is by the interpretation of some phrase. Thus, Pope Gregory XIV decided that assassins are not worthy to enjoy the benefit of sanctuary in churches and ought to be dragged out of them; and yet our four-and-twenty elders affirm that 'the penalty of this bull is not incurred by all those that kill in treachery.' This may appear to you a contradiction; but we get over this by interpreting the word assassin as follows: 'Are assassins unworthy of sanctuary in churches? Yes, by the bull of Gregory XIV they are. But by the word assassins we understand those that have received money to murder one; and, accordingly, such as kill without taking any reward for the deed, but merely to oblige their friends, do not come under the category of assassins.'"

"Take another instance: It is said in the Gospel, 'Give alms of your superfluity.' Several casuists, however, have contrived to discharge the wealthiest from the obligation of alms-giving. This may appear another paradox, but the matter is easily put to rights by giving such an interpretation to the word superfluity that it will seldom or never happen that any one is troubled with such an article. This feat has been accomplished by the learned Vasquez, in his Treatise on Alms, c. 4: 'What men of the world lay up to improve their circumstances, or

those of their relatives, cannot be termed superfluity, and accordingly, such a thing as superfluity is seldom to be found among men of the world, not even excepting kings.' Diana, too, who generally founds on our fathers, having quoted these words of Vasquez, justly concludes, 'that as to the question whether the rich are bound to give alms of their superfluity, even though the affirmative were true, it will seldom or never happen to be obligatory in practice.'"

"I see very well how that follows from the doctrine of Vasquez," said I. "But how would you answer this objection, that, in working out one's salvation, it would be as safe, according to Vasquez, to give no alms, provided one can muster as much ambition as to have no superfluity; as it is safe, according to the Gospel, to have no ambition at all, in order to have some superfluity for the purpose of alms-giving?"

"Why," returned he, "the answer would be that both of these ways are safe according to the Gospel; the one according to the Gospel in its more literal and obvious sense, and the other according to the same Gospel as interpreted by Vasquez. There you see the utility of interpretations. When the terms are so clear, however," he continued, "as not to admit of an interpretation, we have recourse to the observation of favourable circumstances. A single example will illustrate this. The popes have denounced excommunication on monks who lay aside their canonicals; our casuists, notwithstanding, put it as a question, 'On what occasions may a monk lay aside his religious habits without incurring excommunication?' They mention a number of cases in which they may, and among others the following: 'If he has laid it aside for an infamous purpose, such as to pick pockets or to go incognito into haunts of profligacy, meaning shortly after to resume it.' It is evident the bulls have no reference to cases of that description."

I could hardly believe that and begged the father to show me the passage in the original. He did so, and under the chapter headed "Practice according to the School of the Society of Jesus"- Praxis ex Societatis Jesu Schola- I read these very words: Si habitum dimittat ut furetur occulte, vel fornicetur. He showed me

the same thing in Diana, in these terms: Ut eat incognitus ad lupanar. “And why, father,” I asked, “are they discharged from excommunication on such occasions?”

“Don’t you understand it?” he replied. “Only think what a scandal it would be, were a monk surprised in such a predicament with his canonicals on! And have you never heard,” he continued, “how they answer the first bull contra sollicitantes and how our four-and-twenty, in another chapter of the Practice according to the School of our Society, explain the bull of Pius V contra clericos, &c.?”

“I know nothing about all that,” said I.

“Then it is a sign you have not read much of Escobar,” returned the monk.

“I got him only yesterday, father, said I; “and I had no small difficulty, too, in procuring a copy. I don’t know how it is, but everybody of late has been in search of him.”

“The passage to which I referred,” returned the monk, “may be found in treatise I, example 8, no. 102. Consult it at your leisure when you go home.”

I did so that very night; but it is so shockingly bad that I dare not transcribe it.

The good father then went on to say: “You now understand what use we make of favourable circumstances. Sometimes, however, obstinate cases will occur, which will not admit of this mode of adjustment; so much so, indeed, that you would almost suppose they involved flat contradictions. For example, three popes have decided that monks who are bound by a particular vow to a Lenten life cannot be absolved from it even though they should become bishops. And yet Diana avers that notwithstanding this decision they are absolved.

“And how does he reconcile that?” said I.

“By the most subtle of all the modern methods, and by the nicest possible application of probability,” replied the monk. “You may recollect you were told the other day that the affirmative and negative of most opinions have each, according to our doctors, some probability enough, at least, to be followed with a safe conscience. Not that the pro and con are both true in the same sense- that is impossible- but only they are both probable and, therefore, safe, as a matter of

course. On this principle our worthy friend Diana remarks: ‘To the decision of these three popes, which is contrary to my opinion, I answer that they spoke in this way by adhering to the affirmative side- which, in fact, even in my judgement, is probable; but it does not follow from this that the negative may not have its probability too.’ And in the same treatise, speaking of another subject on which he again differs from a pope, he says: ‘The pope, I grant, has said it as the head of the Church; but his decision does not extend beyond the sphere of the probability of his own opinion.’ Now you perceive this is not doing any harm to the opinions of the popes; such a thing would never be tolerated at Rome, where Diana is in high repute. For he does not say that what the popes have decided is not probable; but leaving their opinion within the sphere of probability, he merely says that the contrary is also probable.”

“That is very respectful,” said I.

“Yes,” added the monk, “and rather more ingenious than the reply made by Father Bauny, when his books were censured at Rome; for, when pushed very hard on this point by M. Hallier, he made bold to write: ‘What has the censure of Rome to do with that of France?’ You now see how, either by the interpretation of terms, by the observation of favourable circumstances, or by the aid of the double probability of pro and con, we always contrive to reconcile those seeming contradictions which occasioned you so much surprise, without ever touching on the decisions of Scripture, councils, or popes.”

“Reverend father,” said I, “how happy the world is in having such men as you for its masters! And what blessings are these probabilities! I never knew the reason why you took such pains to establish that a single doctor, if a grave one, might render an opinion probable, and that the contrary might be so too, and that one may choose any side one pleases, even though he does not believe it to be the right side, and all with such a safe conscience, that the confessor who should refuse him absolution on the faith of the casuists would be in a state of damnation. But I see now that a single casuist may make new rules of morality at his

discretion and dispose, according to his fancy, of everything pertaining to the regulation of manners."

"What you have now said," rejoined the father, "would require to be modified a little. Pay attention now, while I explain our method, and you will observe the progress of a new opinion, from its birth to its maturity. First, the grave doctor who invented it exhibits it to the world, casting it abroad like seed, that it may take root. In this state it is very feeble; it requires time gradually to ripen. This accounts for Diana, who has introduced a great many of these opinions, saying: 'I advance this opinion; but as it is new, I give it time to come to maturity- relinquo tempori maturandum.' Thus in a few years it becomes insensibly consolidated; and, after a considerable time, it is sanctioned by the tacit approbation of the Church, according to the grand maxim of Father Bauny, 'that if an opinion has been advanced by some casuist, and has not been impugned by the Church, it is a sign that she approves of it.' And, in fact, on this principle he authenticates one of his own principles in his sixth treatise, ."

"Indeed, father! " cried I, "why, on this principle the Church would approve of all the abuses which she tolerates, and all the errors in all the books which she does not censure!"

"Dispute the point with Father Bauny," he replied. "I am merely quoting his words, and you begin to quarrel with me. There is no disputing with facts, sir. Well, as I was saying, when time has thus matured an opinion, it thenceforth becomes completely probable and safe. Hence the learned Caramuel, in dedicating his Fundamental Theology to Diana, declares that this great Diana has rendered many opinions probable which were not so before- quae antea non erant, and that, therefore, in following them, persons do not sin now, though they would have sinned formerly- jam non peccant, licet ante peccaverint."

"Truly, father," I observed, "it must be worth one's while living in the neighbourhood of your doctors. Why, of two individuals who do the same actions, he that knows nothing about their doctrine sins, while he that knows it does no sin. It seems, then, that their doctrine possesses at once an edifying and a

justifying virtue! The law of God, according to St. Paul, made transgressors; but this law of yours makes nearly all of us innocent. I beseech you, my dear sir, let me know all about it. I will not leave you till you have told me all the maxims which your casuists have established."

"Alas!" the monk exclaimed, "our main object, no doubt, should have been to establish no other maxims than those of the Gospel in all their strictness: and it is easy to see, from the Rules for the regulation of our manners, that, if we tolerate some degree of relaxation in others, it is rather out of complaisance than through design. The truth is, sir, we are forced to it. Men have arrived at such a pitch of corruption nowadays that, unable to make them come to us, we must e'en go to them, otherwise they would cast us off altogether; and, what is worse, they would become perfect castaways. It is to retain such characters as these that our casuists have taken under consideration the vices to which people of various conditions are most addicted, with the view of laying down maxims which, while they cannot be said to violate the truth, are so gentle that he must be a very impracticable subject indeed who is not pleased with them. The grand project of our Society, for the good of religion, is never to repulse any one, let him be what he may, and so avoid driving people to despair.

"They have got maxims, therefore, for all sorts of persons; for beneficiaries, for priests, for monks; for gentlemen, for servants; for rich men, for commercial men; for people in embarrassed or indigent circumstances; for devout women, and women that are not devout; for married people, and irregular people. In short, nothing has escaped their foresight."

"In other words," said I, "they have got maxims for the clergy, the nobility, and the commons. Well, I am quite impatient to hear them."

"Let us commence," resumed the father, 'with the beneficiaries. You are aware of the traffic with benefices that is now carried on, and that, were the matter referred to St. Thomas and the ancients who had written on it, there might chance to be some simoniacs in the Church. This rendered it highly necessary for our fathers to exercise their prudence in finding out a palliative. With what success

they have done so will appear from the following words of Valencia, who is one of Escobar's 'four living creatures.' At the end of a long discourse, in which he suggests various expedients, he propounds the following at page 2039, vol. iii, which, to my mind, is the best: 'If a person gives a temporal in exchange for a spiritual good'- that is, if he gives money for a benefice- 'and gives the money as the price of the benefice, it is manifest simony. But if he gives it merely as the motive which inclines the will of the patron to confer on him the living, it is not simony, even though the person who confers it considers and expects the money as the principal object.' Tanner, who is also a member of our Society, affirms the same thing, vol. iii, p.1519, although he 'grants that St. Thomas is opposed to it; for he expressly teaches that it is always simony to give a spiritual for a temporal good, if the temporal is the end in view.' By this means we prevent an immense number of simoniacal transactions; for who would be so desperately wicked as to refuse, when giving money for a benefice, to take the simple precaution of so directing his intentions as to give it as a motive to induce the beneficiary to part with it, instead of giving it as the price of the benefice? No man, surely, can be so far left to himself as that would come to."

"I agree with you there," I replied; "all men, I should think, have sufficient grace to make a bargain of that sort."

"There can be no doubt of it," returned the monk. "Such, then, is the way in which we soften matters in regard to the beneficiaries. And now for the priests- we have maxims pretty favourable to them also. Take the following, for example, from our four-and-twenty elders: "Can a priest, who has received money to say a mass, take an additional sum upon the same mass? Yes, says Filiutius, he may, by applying that part of the sacrifice which belongs to himself as a priest to the person who paid him last; provided he does not take a sum equivalent to a whole mass, but only a part, such as the third of a mass.'"

"Surely, father," said I, "this must be one of those cases in which the pro and the con have both their share of probability. What you have now stated cannot fail, of course, to be probable, having the authority of such men as Filiutius and

Escobar; and yet, leaving that within the sphere of probability, it strikes me that the contrary opinion might be made out to be probable too, and might be supported by such reasons as the following: That, while the Church allows priests who are in poor circumstances to take money for their masses, seeing it is but right that those who serve at the altar should live by the altar, she never intended that they should barter the sacrifice for money, and, still less, that they should deprive themselves of those benefits which they ought themselves, in the first place, to draw from it; to which I might add that, according to St. Paul, the priests are to offer sacrifice first for themselves and then for the people; and that, accordingly, while permitted to participate with others in the benefit of the sacrifice, they are not at liberty to forego their share by transferring it to another for a third of a mass, or, in other words, for the matter of fourpence or fivepence. Verily, father, little as I pretend to be a grave man, I might contrive to make this opinion probable."

"It would cost you no great pains to do that, replied the monk; "it is visibly probable already. The difficulty lies in discovering probability in the converse of opinions manifestly good; and this is a feat which none but great men can achieve. Father Bauny shines in this department. It is really delightful to see that learned casuist examining with characteristic ingenuity and subtlety the negative and affirmative of the same question, and proving both of them to be right! Thus in the matter of priests, he says in one place: 'No law can be made to oblige the curates to say mass every day; for such a law would unquestionably (haud dubie) expose them to the danger of saying it sometimes in mortal sin.' And yet, in another part of the same treatise, he says, 'that priests who have received money for saying mass every day ought to say it every day, and that they cannot excuse themselves on the ground that they are not always in a fit state for the service; because it is in their power at all times to do penance, and if they neglect this they have themselves to blame for it and not the person who made them say mass.' And to relieve their minds from all scruples on the subject, he thus resolves the question: 'May a priest say mass on the same day in which he has committed a

mortal sin of the worst kind, in the way of confessing himself beforehand?' Villalobos says no, because of his impurity; but Sancius says: 'He may without any sin; and I hold his opinion to be safe, and one which may be followed in practice- et tuta et sequenda in praxi.'"

"Follow this opinion in practice!" cried I. "Will any priest who has fallen into such irregularities have the assurance on the same day to approach the altar, on the mere word of Father Bauny? Is he not bound to submit to the ancient laws of the Church, which debarred from the sacrifice forever, or at least for a long time, priests who had committed sins of that description- instead of following the modern opinions of casuists, who would admit him to it on the very day that witnessed his fall?"

"You have a very short memory, returned the monk. "Did I not inform you a little ago that, according to our fathers Cellot and Reginald, 'in matters of morality we are to follow, not the ancient fathers, but the modern casuists?'"

"I remember it perfectly," said I; "but we have something more here: we have the laws of the Church."

"True," he replied; "but this shows you do not know another capital maxim of our fathers, 'that the laws of the Church lose their authority when they have gone into desuetude- cum jam desuetudine abierunt- as Filiutius says. We know the present exigencies of the Church much better than the ancients could do. Were we to be so strict in excluding priests from the altar, you can understand there would not be such a great number of masses. Now a multitude of masses brings such a revenue of glory to God and of good to souls that I may venture to say, with Father Cellot, that there would not be too many priests, 'though not only all men and women, were that possible, but even inanimate bodies, and even brute beasts- bruta animalia- were transformed into priests to celebrate mass.'"

I was so astounded at the extravagance of this imagination that I could not utter a word and allowed him to go on with his discourse. "Enough, however, about priests; I am afraid of getting tedious: let us come to the monks. The grand difficulty with them is the obedience they owe to their superiors; now observe the

palliative which our fathers apply in this case. Castro Palao of our Society has said: ‘Beyond all dispute, a monk who has a probable opinion of his own, is not bound to obey his superior, though the opinion of the latter is the more probable. For the monk is at liberty to adopt the opinion which is more agreeable to himself- quae sibi gratior fuerit- as Sanchez says. And though the order of his superior be just, that does not oblige you to obey him, for it is not just at all points or in every respect- non undequaque juste praecepit- but only probably so; and, consequently, you are only probably bound to obey him, and probably not bound- probabiliter obligatus, et probabiliter deobligatus.’”

“Certainly, father,” said I, “it is impossible too highly to estimate this precious fruit of the double probability.”

“It is of great use indeed,” he replied; “but we must be brief. Let me only give you the following specimen of our famous Molina in favour of monks who are expelled from their convents for irregularities. Escobar quotes him thus: ‘Molina asserts that a monk expelled from his monastery is not obliged to reform in order to get back again, and that he is no longer bound by his vow of obedience.’”

“Well, father,” cried I, “this is all very comfortable for the clergy. Your casuists, I perceive, have been very indulgent to them, and no wonder- they were legislating, so to speak, for themselves. I am afraid people of other conditions are not so liberally treated. Every one for himself in this world.”

“There you do us wrong,” returned the monk; “they could not have been kinder to themselves than we have been to them. We treat all, from the highest to the lowest, with an even-handed charity, sir. And to prove this, you tempt me to tell you our maxims for servants. In reference to this class, we have taken into consideration the difficulty they must experience, when they are men of conscience, in serving profligate masters. For, if they refuse to perform all the errands in which they are employed, they lose their places; and if they yield obedience, they have their scruples. To relieve them from these, our four-and-twenty fathers have specified the services which they may render with a safe conscience; such as ‘carrying letters and presents, opening doors and windows,

helping their master to reach the window, holding the ladder which he is mounting. All this,' say they, 'is allowable and indifferent; it is true that, as to holding the ladder, they must be threatened, more than usually, with being punished for refusing; for it is doing an injury to the master of a house to enter it by the window.' You perceive the judiciousness of that observation, of course?"

"I expected nothing less," said I, "from a book edited by four-and-twenty Jesuits."

"But," added the monk, "Father Bauny has gone beyond this; he has taught valets how to perform these sorts of offices for their masters quite innocently, by making them direct their intention, not to the sins to which they are accessary, but to the gain which is to accrue from them. In his Summary of Sins, p.710, first edition, he thus states the matter: 'Let confessors observe,' says he, 'that they cannot absolve valets who perform base errands, if they consent to the sins of their masters; but the reverse holds true, if they have done the thing merely from a regard to their temporal emolument.' And that, I should conceive, is no difficult matter to do; for why should they insist on consenting to sins of which they taste nothing but the trouble? The same Father Bauny has established a prime maxim in favour of those who are not content with their wages: 'May servants who are dissatisfied with their wages use means to raise them by laying their hands on as much of the property of their masters as they may consider necessary to make the said wages equivalent to their trouble? They may, in certain circumstances; as when they are so poor that, in looking for a situation, they have been obliged to accept the offer made to them, and when other servants of the same class are gaining more than they, elsewhere.'"

"Ha, father!" cried I, "that is John d'Alba's passage, I declare."

"What John d'Alba?" inquired the father: "what do you mean?"

"Strange, father!" returned I: "do you not remember what happened in this city in the year 1647? Where in the world were you living at that time?"

"I was teaching cases of conscience in one of our colleges far from Paris," he replied.

“I see you don’t know the story, father: I must tell it to you. I heard it related the other day by a man of honour, whom I met in company. He told us that this John d’Alba, who was in the service of your fathers in the College of Clermont, in the Rue St. Jacques, being dissatisfied with his wages, had purloined something to make himself amends; and that your fathers, on discovering the theft, had thrown him into prison on the charge of larceny. The case was reported to the court, if I recollect right, on the 16th of April, 1647; for he was very minute in his statements, and indeed they would hardly have been credible otherwise. The poor fellow, on being questioned, confessed to having taken some pewter plates, but maintained that for all that he had not stolen them; pleading in his defence this very doctrine of Father Bauny, which he produced before the judges, along with a pamphlet by one of your fathers, under whom he had studied cases of conscience, and who had taught him the same thing. Whereupon M. de Montrouge, one of the most respected members of the court, said, in giving his opinion, ‘that he did not see how, on the ground of the writings of these fathers- writings containing a doctrine so illegal, pernicious, and contrary to all laws, natural, divine, and human, and calculated to ruin all families, and sanction all sorts of household robbery- they could discharge the accused. But his opinion was that this too faithful disciple should be whipped before the college gate, by the hand of the common hangman; and that, at the same time, this functionary should burn the writings of these fathers which treated of larceny, with certification that they were prohibited from teaching such doctrine in future, upon pain of death.’

“The result of this judgement, which was heartily approved of, was waited for with much curiosity, when some incident occurred which made them delay procedure. But in the meantime the prisoner disappeared, nobody knew how, and nothing more was heard about the affair; so that John d’Alba got off, pewter plates and all. Such was the account he gave us, to which he added, that the judgement of M. de Montrouge was entered on the records of the court, where any one may consult it. We were highly amused at the story.”

“What are you trifling about now?” cried the monk. “What does all that signify? I was explaining the maxims of our casuists, and was just going to speak of those relating to gentlemen, when you interrupt me with impertinent stories.”

“It was only something put in by the way, father,” I observed; “and besides, I was anxious to apprise you of an important circumstance, which I find you have overlooked in establishing your doctrine of probability.”

“Ay, indeed!” exclaimed the monk, “what defect can this be that has escaped the notice of so many ingenious men?”

“You have certainly,” continued I, “contrived to place your disciples in perfect safety so far as God and the conscience are concerned; for they are quite safe in that quarter, according to you, by following in the wake of a grave doctor. You have also secured them on the part of the confessors, by obliging priests, on the pain of mortal sin, to absolve all who follow a probable opinion. But you have neglected to secure them on the part of the judges; so that, in following your probabilities, they are in danger of coming into contact with the whip and the gallows. This is a sad oversight.”

“You are right,” said the monk; “I am glad you mentioned it. But the reason is we have no such power over magistrates as over the confessors, who are obliged to refer to us in cases of conscience, in which we are the sovereign judges.”

“So I understand,” returned I; “but if, on the one hand, you are the judges of the confessors, are you not, on the other hand, the confessors of the judges? Your power is very extensive. Oblige them, on pain of being debarred from the sacraments, to acquit all criminals who act on a probable opinion; otherwise it may happen, to the great contempt and scandal of probability, that those whom you render innocent in theory may be whipped or hanged in practice. Without something of this kind, how can you expect to get disciples?”

“The matter deserves consideration,” said he; “it will never do to neglect it. I shall suggest it to our father Provincial. You might, however, have reserved this advice to some other time, without interrupting the account I was about to give you of the maxims which we have established in favour of gentlemen; and I shall

not give you any more information, except on condition that you do not tell me any more stories."

This is all you shall have from me at present; for it would require more than the limits of one letter to acquaint you with all that I learned in a single conversation. Meanwhile I am, &c.

LETTER VII



Paris, April 25, 1656

SIR,

Having succeeded in pacifying the good father, who had been rather disconcerted by the story of John d'Alba, he resumed the conversation, on my assuring him that I would avoid all such interruptions in future, and spoke of the maxims of his casuists with regard to gentlemen, nearly in the following terms:

"You know," he said, "that the ruling passion of persons in that rank of life is 'the point of honor,' which is perpetually driving them into acts of violence apparently quite at variance with Christian piety; so that, in fact, they would be almost all of them excluded from our confessionals, had not our fathers relaxed a little from the strictness of religion, to accommodate themselves to the weakness of humanity. Anxious to keep on good terms both with the Gospel, by doing their duty to God, and with the men of the world, by showing charity to their neighbour, they needed all the wisdom they possessed to devise expedients for so nicely adjusting matters as to permit these gentlemen to adopt the methods usually resorted to for vindicating their honour, without wounding their consciences, and thus reconcile two things apparently so opposite to each other as piety and the point of honour. But, sir, in proportion to the utility of the design, was the difficulty of the execution. You cannot fail, I should think, to realize the magnitude and arduousness of such an enterprise?"

"It astonishes me, certainly," said I, rather coldly.

"It astonishes you, forsooth!" cried the monk. "I can well believe that; many besides you might be astonished at it. Why, don't you know that, on the one hand, the Gospel commands us 'not to render evil for evil, but to leave vengeance to God'; and that, on the other hand, the laws of the world forbid our enduring an

affront without demanding satisfaction from the offender, and that often at the expense of his life? You have never, I am sure, met with anything to all appearance more diametrically opposed than these two codes of morals; and yet, when told that our fathers have reconciled them, you have nothing more to say than simply that this astonishes you!"

"I did not sufficiently explain myself, father. I should certainly have considered the thing perfectly impracticable, if I had not known, from what I have seen of your fathers, that they are capable of doing with ease what is impossible to other men. This led me to anticipate that they must have discovered some method for meeting the difficulty- a method which I admire even before knowing it, and which I pray you to explain to me."

"Since that is your view of the matter," replied the monk, "I cannot refuse you. Know then, that this marvellous principle is our grand method of directing the intention- the importance of which, in our moral system, is such that I might almost venture to compare it with the doctrine of probability. You have had some glimpses of it in passing, from certain maxims which I mentioned to you. For example, when I was showing you how servants might execute certain troublesome jobs with a safe conscience, did you not remark that it was simply by diverting their intention from the evil to which they were accessary to the profit which they might reap from the transaction? Now that is what we call directing the intention. You saw, too, that, were it not for a similar divergence of the mind, those who give money for benefices might be downright simoniacs. But I will now show you this grand method in all its glory, as it applies to the subject of homicide- a crime which it justifies in a thousand instances; in order that, from this startling result, you may form an idea of all that it is calculated to effect."

"I foresee already," said I, "that, according to this mode, everything will be permitted; it win stick at nothing."

"You always fly from the one extreme to the other," replied the monk: "prithee avoid that habit. For, just to show you that we are far from permitting everything, let me tell you that we never suffer such a thing as a formal intention to sin, with

the sole design of sinning; and if any person whatever should persist in having no other end but evil in the evil that he does, we break with him at once: such conduct is diabolical. This holds true, without exception of age, sex, or rank. But when the person is not of such a wretched disposition as this, we try to put in practice our method of directing the intention, which simply consists in his proposing to himself, as the end of his actions, some allowable object. Not that we do not endeavour, as far as we can, to dissuade men from doing things forbidden; but when we cannot prevent the action, we at least purify the motive, and thus correct the viciousness of the means by the goodness of the end. Such is the way in which our fathers have contrived to permit those acts of violence to which men usually resort in vindication of their honour. They have no more to do than to turn off their intention from the desire of vengeance, which is criminal, and direct it to a desire to defend their honour, which, according to us, is quite warrantable. And in this way our doctors discharge all their duty towards God and towards man. By permitting the action, they gratify the world; and by purifying the intention, they give satisfaction to the Gospel. This is a secret, sir, which was entirely unknown to the ancients; the world is indebted for the discovery entirely to our doctors. You understand it now, I hope?"

"Perfectly well," was my reply. "To men you grant the outward material effect of the action; and to God you give the inward and spiritual movement of the intention; and by this equitable partition, you form an alliance between the laws of God and the laws of men. But, my dear sir, to be frank with you, I can hardly trust your premisses, and I suspect that your authors will tell another tale."

"You do me injustice, rejoined the monk; "I advance nothing but what I am ready to prove, and that by such a rich array of passages that altogether their number, their authority, and their reasonings, will fill you with admiration. To show you, for example, the alliance which our fathers have formed between the maxims of the Gospel and those of the world, by thus regulating the intention, let me refer you to Reginald: 'Private persons are forbidden to avenge themselves; for St. Paul says to the Romans (12), "Recompense to no man evil for evil"; and

Ecclesiasticus says (28), “He that taketh vengeance shall draw on himself the vengeance of God, and his sins will not be forgotten.” Besides all that is said in the Gospel about forgiving offences, as in chapters 6 and 18 of St. Matthew.’”

“Well, father, if after that he says anything contrary to the Scripture, it will not be from lack of scriptural knowledge, at any rate. Pray, how does he conclude?”

“You shall hear,” he said. “From all this it appears that a military man may demand satisfaction on the spot from the person who has injured him- not, indeed, with the intention of rendering evil for evil, but with that of preserving his honour- ‘non ut malum pro malo reddat, sed ut conservet honorem.’ See you how carefully they guard against the intention of rendering evil for evil, because the Scripture condemns it? This is what they will tolerate on no account. Thus Lessius observes, that ‘if a man has received a blow on the face, he must on no account have an intention to avenge himself; but he may lawfully have an intention to avert infamy, and may, with that view, repel the insult immediately, even at the point of the sword- etiam cum gladio!’ So far are we from permitting any one to cherish the design of taking vengeance on his enemies that our fathers will not allow any even to wish their death- by a movement of hatred. ‘If your enemy is disposed to injure you,’ says Escobar, ‘you have no right to wish his death, by a movement of hatred; though you may, with a view to save yourself from harm.’ So legitimate, indeed, is this wish, with such an intention, that our great Hurtado de Mendoza says that ‘we may pray God to visit with speedy death those who are bent on persecuting us, if there is no other way of escaping from it.’”

“May it please your reverence,” said I, “the Church has forgotten to insert a petition to that effect among her prayers.”

“They have not put in everything into the prayers that one may lawfully ask of God,” answered the monk. “Besides, in the present case, the thing was impossible, for this same opinion is of more recent standing than the Breviary. You are not a good chronologist, friend. But, not to wander from the point, let me request vour attention to the following passage, cited by Diana from Gaspar Hurtado, one of Escobar’s four-and-twenty fathers: ‘An incumbent may, without

any mortal sin, desire the decease of a life-renter on his benefice, and a son that of his father, and rejoice when it happens; provided always it is for the sake of the profit that is to accrue from the event, and not from personal aversion.'"

"Good!" cried I. "That is certainly a very happy hit; and I can easily see that the doctrine admits of a wide application. But yet there are certain cases, the solution of which, though of great importance for gentlemen, might present still greater difficulties."

"Propose them, if you please, that we may see," said the monk.

"Show me, with all your directing of the intention," returned I, "that it is allowable to fight a duel."

"Our great Hurtado de Mendoza," said the father, "will satisfy you on that point in a twinkling. 'If a gentleman,' says he, in a passage cited by Diana, 'who is challenged to fight a duel, is well known to have no religion, and if the vices to which he is openly and unscrupulously addicted are such as would lead people to conclude, in the event of his refusing to fight, that he is actuated, not by the fear of God, but by cowardice, and induce them to say of him that he was a hen, and not a man, gallina, et non vir; in that case he may, to save his honour, appear at the appointed spot- not, indeed, with the express intention of fighting a duel, but merely with that of defending himself, should the person who challenged him come there unjustly to attack him. His action in this case, viewed by itself, will be perfectly indifferent; for what moral evil is there in one stepping into a field, taking a stroll in expectation of meeting a person, and defending one's self in the event of being attacked? And thus the gentleman is guilty of no sin whatever; for in fact it cannot be called accepting a challenge at all, his intention being directed to other circumstances, and the acceptance of a challenge consisting in an express intention to fight, which we are supposing the gentleman never had.'"

"You have not kept your word with me, sir," said I. "This is not, properly speaking, to permit duelling; on the contrary, the casuist is so persuaded that this practice is forbidden that, in licensing the action in question, he carefully avoids calling it a duel."

“Ah!” cried the monk, “you begin to get knowing on my hand, I am glad to see. I might reply that the author I have quoted grants all that duellists are disposed to ask. But since you must have a categorical answer, I shall allow our Father Layman to give it for me. He permits duelling in so many words, provided that, in accepting the challenge, the person directs his intention solely to the preservation of his honour or his property: ‘If a soldier or a courtier is in such a predicament that he must lose either his honour or his fortune unless he accepts a challenge, I see nothing to hinder him from doing so in self-defence.’ The same thing is said by Peter Hurtado, as quoted by our famous Escobar; his words are: ‘One may fight a duel even to defend one’s property, should that be necessary; because every man has a right to defend his property, though at the expense of his enemy’s life!’”

I was struck, on hearing these passages, with the reflection that, while the piety of the king appears in his exerting all his power to prohibit and abolish the practice of duelling in the State, the piety of the Jesuits is shown in their employing all their ingenuity to tolerate and sanction it in the Church. But the good father was in such an excellent key for talking that it would have been cruel to have interrupted him; so he went on with his discourse.

“In short,” said he, “Sanchez (mark, now, what great names I am quoting to you!) Sanchez, sir, goes a step further; for he shows how, simply by managing the intention rightly, a person may not only receive a challenge, but give one. And our Escobar follows him.”

“Prove that, father,” said I, “and I shall give up the point: but I will not believe that he has written it, unless I see it in print.”

“Read it yourself, then,” he replied: and, to be sure, I read the following extract from the Moral Theology of Sanchez: “It is perfectly reasonable to hold that a man may fight a duel to save his life, his honour, or any considerable portion of his property, when it is apparent that there is a design to deprive him of these unjustly, by law-suits and chicanery, and when there is no other way of preserving them. Navarre justly observes that, in such cases, it is lawful either to accept or to

send a challenge- licet acceptare et offerre duellum. The same author adds that there is nothing to prevent one from despatching one's adversary in a private way. Indeed, in the circumstances referred to, it is advisable to avoid employing the method of the duel, if it is possible to settle the affair by privately killing our enemy; for, by this means, we escape at once from exposing our life in the combat, and from participating in the sin which our opponent would have committed by fighting the duel!"

"A most pious assassination!" said I. "Still, however, pious though it be, it is assassination, if a man is permitted to kill his enemy in a treacherous manner."

"Did I say that he might kill him treacherously?" cried the monk. "God forbid! I said he might kill him privately, and you conclude that he may kill him treacherously, as if that were the same thing! Attend, sir, to Escobar's definition before allowing yourself to speak again on this subject: 'We call it killing in treachery when the person who is slain had no reason to suspect such a fate. He, therefore, that slays his enemy cannot be said to kill him in treachery, even although the blow should be given insidiously and behind his back- licet per insidias aut a tergo percutiat.' And again: 'He that kills his enemy, with whom he was reconciled under a promise of never again attempting his life, cannot be absolutely said to kill in treachery, unless there was between them all the stricter friendship- arctior amicitia.' You see now you do not even understand what the terms signify, and yet you pretend to talk like a doctor."

"I grant you this is something quite new to me," I replied; "and I should gather from that definition that few, if any, were ever killed in treachery; for people seldom take it into their heads to assassinate any but their enemies. Be this as it may, however, it seems that, according to Sanchez, a man may freely slay (I do not say treacherously, but only insidiously and behind his back) a calumniator, for example, who prosecutes us at law?"

"Certainly he may," returned the monk, "always, however, in the way of giving a right direction to the intention: you constantly forget the main point. Molina supports the same doctrine; and what is more, our learned brother Reginald

maintains that we may despatch the false witnesses whom he summons against us. And, to crown the whole, according to our great and famous fathers Tanner and Emanuel Sa, it is lawful to kill both the false witnesses and the judge himself, if he has had any collusion with them. Here are Tanner's very words: 'Sotus and Lessius think that it is not lawful to kill the false witnesses and the magistrate who conspire together to put an innocent person to death; but Emanuel Sa and other authors with good reason impugn that sentiment, at least so far as the conscience is concerned.' And he goes on to show that it is quite lawful to kill both the witnesses and the judge."

"Well, father," said I, "I think I now understand pretty well your principle regarding the direction of the intention: but I should like to know something of its consequences, and all the cases in which this method of yours arms a man with the power of life and death. Let us go over them again, for fear of mistake, for equivocation here might be attended with dangerous results. Killing is a matter which requires to be well-timed, and to be backed with a good probable opinion. You have assured me, then, that by giving a proper turn to the intention, it is lawful, according to your fathers, for the preservation of one's honour, or even property, to accept a challenge to a duel, to give one sometimes, to kill in a private way a false accuser, and his witnesses along with him, and even the judge who has been bribed to favour them; and you have also told me that he who has got a blow may, without avenging himself, retaliate with the sword. But you have not told me, father, to what length he may go."

"He can hardly mistake there," replied the father, "for he may go all the length of killing his man. This is satisfactorily proved by the learned Henriquez, and others of our fathers quoted by Escobar, as follows: 'It is perfectly right to kill a person who has given us a box on the ear, although he should run away, provided it is not done through hatred or revenge, and there is no danger of giving occasion thereby to murders of a gross kind and hurtful to society. And the reason is that it is as lawful to pursue the thief that has stolen our honour, as him that has run away with our property. For, although your honour cannot be said to be in the

hands of your enemy in the same sense as your goods and chattels are in the hands of the thief, still it may be recovered in the same way- by showing proofs of greatness and authority, and thus acquiring the esteem of men. And, in point of fact, is it not certain that the man who has received a buffet on the ear is held to be under disgrace, until he has wiped off the insult with the blood of his enemy?'"

I was so shocked on hearing this that it was with great difficulty I could contain myself; but, in my anxiety to hear the rest, I allowed him to proceed.

"Nay," he continued, "it is allowable to prevent a buffet, by killing him that meant to give it, if there be no other way to escape the insult. This opinion is quite common with our fathers. For example, Azor, one of the four-and-twenty elders, proposing the question, 'Is it lawful for a man of honour to kill another who threatens to give him a slap on the face, or strike him with a stick?' replies, 'Some say he may not; alleging that the life of our neighbour is more precious than our honour, and that it would be an act of cruelty to kill a man merely to avoid a blow. Others, however, think that it is allowable; and I certainly consider it probable, when there is no other way of warding off the insult; for, otherwise, the honour of the innocent would be constantly exposed to the malice of the insolent.' The same opinion is given by our great Filiutius; by Father Hereau, in his Treatise on Homicide, by Hurtado de Mendoza, in his Disputations, by Becan, in his Summary; by our Fathers Flahaut and Lecourt, in those writings which the University, in their third petition, quoted at length, in order to bring them into disgrace (though in this they failed); and by Escobar. In short, this opinion is so general that Lessius lays it down as a point which no casuist has contested; he quotes a great many that uphold, and none that deny it; and particularly Peter Navarre, who, speaking of affronts in general (and there is none more provoking than a box on the ear), declares that 'by the universal consent of the casuists, it is lawful to kill the calumniator, if there be no other way of averting the affront- ex sententia omnium, licet contumeliosum occidere, si aliter ea injuria arceri nequit.' Do you wish any more authorities?" asked the monk.

I declared I was much obliged to him; I had heard rather more than enough of them already. But, just to see how far this damnable doctrine would go, I said, “But, father, may not one be allowed to kill for something still less? Might not a person so direct his intention as lawfully to kill another for telling a lie, for example?”

“He may,” returned the monk; “and according to Father Baldelle, quoted by Escobar, ‘you may lawfully take the life of another for saying, “You have told a lie”; if there is no other way of shutting his mouth.’ The same thing may be done in the case of slanders. Our Fathers Lessius and Hereau agree in the following sentiments: ‘If you attempt to ruin my character by telling stories against me in the presence of men of honour, and I have no other way of preventing this than by putting you to death, may I be permitted to do so? According to the modern authors, I may, and that even though I have been really guilty of the crime which you divulge, provided it is a secret one, which you could not establish by legal evidence. And I prove it thus: If you mean to rob me of my honour by giving me a box on the ear, I may prevent it by force of arms; and the same mode of defence is lawful when you would do me the same injury with the tongue. Besides, we may lawfully obviate affronts and, therefore, slanders. In fine, honour is dearer than life; and as it is lawful to kill in defence of life, it must be so to kill in defence of honour.’ There, you see, are arguments in due form; this is demonstration, sir- not mere discussion. And, to conclude, this great man Lessius shows, in the same place, that it is lawful to kill even for a simple gesture, or a sign of contempt. ‘A man’s honour,’ he remarks, ‘may be attacked or filched away in various ways- in all of which vindication appears very reasonable; as, for instance, when one offers to strike us with a stick, or give us a slap on the face, or affront us either by words or signs- sive per signa.’”

“Well, father,” said I, “it must be owned that you have made every possible provision to secure the safety of reputation; but it strikes me that human life is greatly in danger, if any one may be conscientiously put to death simply for a defamatory speech or a saucy gesture.”

“That is true,” he replied; “but, as our fathers are very circumspect, they have thought it proper to forbid putting this doctrine into practice on such trifling occasions. They say, at least, ‘that it ought hardly to be reduced to practice- practice vix probari potest.’ And they have a good reason for that, as you shall see.”

“Oh, I know what it will be,” interrupted I; “because the law of God forbids us to kill, of course.”

“They do not exactly take that ground,” said the father; “as a matter of conscience, and viewing the thing abstractly, they hold it allowable.”

“And why then, do they forbid it?”

“I shall tell you that, sir. It is because, were we to kill all the defamers among us, we should very shortly depopulate the country. ‘Although,’ says Reginald, ‘the opinion that we may kill a man for calumny is not without its probability in theory, the contrary one ought to be followed in practice; for, in our mode of defending ourselves, we should always avoid doing injury to the commonwealth; and it is evident that by killing people in this way there would be too many murders. ‘We should be on our guard,’ says Lessius, ‘lest the practice of this maxim prove hurtful to the State; for in this case it ought not to be permitted- tunc enim non est permittendus.’”

“What, father! is it forbidden only as a point of policy, and not of religion? Few people, I am afraid, will pay any regard to such a prohibition, particularly when in a passion. Very probably they might think they were doing no harm to the State, by ridding it of an unworthy member.”

“And accordingly,” replied the monk, “our Filiutius has fortified that argument with another, which is of no slender importance, namely, ‘that for killing people after this manner, one might be punished in a court of justice.’”

“There now, father; I told you before, that you will never be able to do anything worth the while, unless you get the magistrates to go along with you.”

“The magistrates,” said the father, “as they do not penetrate into the conscience, judge merely of the outside of the action, while we look principally to

the intention; and hence it occasionally happens that our maxims are a little different from theirs."

"Be that as it may, father; from yours, at least, one thing may be fairly inferred- that, by taking care not to injure the commonwealth, we may kill defamers with a safe conscience, provided we can do it with a sound skin. But, sir, after having seen so well to the protection of honour, have you done nothing for property? I am aware it is of inferior importance, but that does not signify; I should think one might direct one's intention to kill for its preservation also."

"Yes," replied the monk; "and I gave you a hint to that effect already, which may have suggested the idea to you. All our casuists agree in that opinion; and they even extend the permission to those cases 'where no further violence is apprehended from those that steal our property; as, for example, where the thief runs away.' Azor, one of our Society, proves that point."

"But, sir, how much must the article be worth, to justify our proceeding to that extremity?"

"According to Reginald and Tanner, 'the article must be of great value in the estimation of a judicious man.' And so think Layman and Filiutius."

"But, father, that is saying nothing to the purpose; where am I to find 'a judicious man' (a rare person to meet with at any time), in order to make this estimation? Why do they not settle upon an exact sum at once?"

"Ay, indeed!" retorted the monk; "and was it so easy, think you, to adjust the comparative value between the life of a man, and a Christian man, too, and money? It is here I would have you feel the need of our casuists. Show me any of your ancient fathers who will tell for how much money we may be allowed to kill a man. What will they say, but 'Non occides- Thou shalt not kill?'"

"And who, then, has ventured to fix that sum?" I inquired.

"Our great and incomparable Molina," he replied- "the glory of our Society- who has, in his inimitable wisdom, estimated the life of a man 'at six or seven ducats; for which sum he assures us it is warrantable to kill a thief, even though he should run off'; and he adds, 'that he would not venture to condemn that man

as guilty of any sin who should kill another for taking away an article worth a crown, or even less- unius aurei, vel minoris adhuc valoris'; which has led Escobar to lay it down, as a general rule, 'that a man may be killed quite regularly, according to Molina, for the value of a crown-piece.'"

"O father," cried I; "where can Molina have got all this wisdom to enable him to determine a matter of such importance, without any aid from Scripture, the councils, or the fathers? It is quite evident that he has obtained an illumination peculiar to himself, and is far beyond St. Augustine in the matter of homicide, as well as of grace. Well, now, I suppose I may consider myself master of this chapter of morals; and I see perfectly that, with the exception of ecclesiastics, nobody need refrain from killing those who injure them in their property or reputation."

"What say you?" exclaimed the monk. "Do you, then, suppose that it would be reasonable that those, who ought of all men to be most respected, should alone be exposed to the insolence of the wicked? Our fathers have provided against that disorder; for Tanner declares that 'Churchmen, and even monks, are permitted to kill, for the purpose of defending not only their lives, but their property, and that of their community.' Molina, Escobar, Becan, Reginald, Layman, Lessius, and others, hold the same language. Nay, according to our celebrated Father Lamy, priests and monks may lawfully prevent those who would injure them by calumnies from carrying their ill designs into effect, by putting them to death. Care, however, must always be taken to direct the intention properly. His words are: 'An ecclesiastic or a monk may warrantably kill a defamer who threatens to publish the scandalous crimes of his community, or his own crimes, when there is no other way of stopping him; if, for instance, he is prepared to circulate his defamations unless promptly despatched. For, in these circumstances, as the monk would be allowed to kill one who threatened to take his life, he is also warranted to kill him who would deprive him of his reputation or his property, in the same way as the men of the world.'"

“I was not aware of that,” said I; “in fact, I have been accustomed simply enough to believe the very reverse, without reflecting on the matter, in consequence of having heard that the Church had such an abhorrence of bloodshed as not even to permit ecclesiastical judges to attend in criminal cases.”

“Never mind that,” he replied; “our Father Lamy has completely proved the doctrine I have laid down, although, with a humility which sits uncommonly well on so great a man, he submits it to the judgement of his judicious readers. Caramuel, too, our famous champion, quoting it in his Fundamental Theology, . thinks it so certain, that he declares the contrary opinion to be destitute of probability, and draws some admirable conclusions from it, such as the following, which he calls ‘the conclusion of conclusions- conclusionum conclusio’: ‘That a priest not only may kill a slanderer, but there are certain circumstances in which it may be his duty to do so- etiam aliquando debet occidere.’ He examines a great many new questions on this principle, such as the following, for instance: ‘May the Jesuits kill the Jansenists?’”

“A curious point of divinity that, father! “ cried I. “I hold the Jansenists to be as good as dead men, according to Father Lamy’s doctrine.”

“There, now, you are in the wrong,” said the monk: “Caramuel infers the very reverse from the same principles.”

“And how so, father?”

“Because,” he replied, “it is not in the power of the Jansenists to injure our reputation. ‘The Jansenists,’ says he, ‘call the Jesuits Pelagians, may they not be killed for that? No; inasmuch as the Jansenists can no more obscure the glory of the Society than an owl can eclipse that of the sun; on the contrary, they have, though against their intention, enhanced it- occidi non possunt, quia nocere non potuerunt.’”

“Ha, father! do the lives of the Jansenists, then, depend on the contingency of their injuring your reputation? If so, I reckon them far from being in a safe position; for supposing it should be thought in the slightest degree probable that they might do you some mischief, why, they are killable at once! You have only to

draw up a syllogism in due form, and, with a direction of the intention, you may despatch your man at once with a safe conscience. Thrice happy must those hot spirits be who cannot bear with injuries, to be instructed in this doctrine! But woe to the poor people who have offended them! Indeed, father, it would be better to have to do with persons who have no religion at all than with those who have been taught on this system. For, after all, the intention of the wounder conveys no comfort to the wounded. The poor man sees nothing of that secret direction of which you speak; he is only sensible of the direction of the blow that is dealt him. And I am by no means sure but a person would feel much less sorry to see himself brutally killed by an infuriated villain than to find himself conscientiously stilettoed by a devotee. To be plain with you, father, I am somewhat staggered at all this; and these questions of Father Lamy and Caramuel do not please me at all."

"How so?" cried the monk. "Are you a Jansenist?"

"I have another reason for it," I replied. "You must know I am in the habit of writing from time to time, to a friend of mine in the country, all that I can learn of the maxims of your doctors. Now, although I do no more than simply report and faithfully quote their own words, yet I am apprehensive lest my letter should fall into the hands of some stray genius who may take into his head that I have done you injury, and may draw some mischievous conclusion from your premisses."

"Away!" cried the monk; "no fear of danger from that quarter, I'll give you my word for it. Know that what our fathers have themselves printed, with the approbation of our superiors, it cannot be wrong to read nor dangerous to publish."

I write you, therefore, on the faith of this worthy father's word of honour. But, in the meantime, I must stop for want of paper- not of passages; for I have got as many more in reserve, and good ones too, as would require volumes to contain them. I am, &c.

LETTER VIII



Paris, May 28, 1656

SIR,

You did not suppose that anybody would have the curiosity to know who we were; but it seems there are people who are trying to make it out, though they are not very happy in their conjectures. Some take me for a doctor of the Sorbonne; others ascribe my letters to four or five persons, who, like me, are neither priests nor Churchmen. All these false surmises convince me that I have succeeded pretty well in my object, which was to conceal myself from all but yourself and the worthy monk, who still continues to bear with my visits, while I still contrive, though with considerable difficulty, to bear with his conversations. I am obliged, however, to restrain myself; for, were he to discover how much I am shocked at his communications, he would discontinue them and thus put it out of my power to fulfil the promise I gave you, of making you acquainted with their morality. You ought to think a great deal of the violence which I thus do to my own feelings. It is no easy matter, I can assure you, to stand still and see the whole system of Christian ethics undermined by such a set of monstrous principles, without daring to put in a word of flat contradiction against them. But, after having borne so much for your satisfaction, I am resolved I shall burst out for my own satisfaction in the end, when his stock of information has been exhausted. Meanwhile, I shall repress my feelings as much as I possibly can for I find that the more I hold my tongue, he is the more communicative. The last time I saw him, he told me so many things that I shall have some difficulty in repeating them all. On the point of restitution you will find they have some most convenient principles. For, however the good monk palliates his maxims, those which I am about to lay before you really go to sanction corrupt judges, usurers, bankrupts,

thieves, prostitutes and sorcerers- all of whom are most liberally absolved from the obligation of restoring their ill-gotten gains. It was thus the monk resumed the conversation:

"At the commencement of our interviews, I engaged to explain to you the maxims of our authors for all ranks and classes; and you have already seen those that relate to beneficiaries, to priests, to monks, to domestics, and to gentlemen. Let us now take a cursory glance at the remaining, and begin with the judges.

"Now I am going to tell you one of the most important and advantageous maxims which our fathers have laid down in their favour. Its author is the learned Castro Palao, one of our four-and-twenty elders. His words are: 'May a judge, in a question of right and wrong, pronounce according to a probable opinion, in preference to the more probable opinion? He may, even though it should be contrary to his own judgement- imo contra propriam opinionem.'"

"Well, father," cried I, "that is a very fair commencement! The judges, surely, are greatly obliged to you; and I am surprised that they should be so hostile, as we have sometimes observed, to your probabilities, seeing these are so favourable to them. For it would appear from this that you give them the same power over men's fortunes as you have given to yourselves over their consciences."

"You perceive we are far from being actuated by self-interest," returned he; "we have had no other end in view than the repose of their consciences; and to the same useful purpose has our great Molina devoted his attention, in regard to the presents which may be made them. To remove any scruples which they might entertain in accepting of these on certain occasions, he has been at the pains to draw out a list of all those cases in which bribes may be taken with a good conscience, provided, at least, there be no special law forbidding them. He says: 'Judges may receive presents from parties when they are given them either for friendship's sake, or in gratitude for some former act of justice, or to induce them to give justice in future, or to oblige them to pay particular attention to their case, or to engage them to despatch it promptly.' The learned Escobar delivers himself to the same effect: 'If there be a number of persons, none of whom have more

right than another to have their causes disposed of, will the judge who accepts of something from one of them, on condition- expacto- of taking up his cause first, be guilty of sin? Certainly not, according to Layman; for, in common equity, he does no injury to the rest by granting to one, in consideration of his present, what he was at liberty to grant to any of them he pleased; and besides, being under an equal obligation to them all in respect of their right, he becomes more obliged to the individual who furnished the donation, who thereby acquired for himself a preference above the rest- a preference which seems capable of a pecuniary valuation- quae obligatio videtur pretio aestimabilis.'"

"May it please your reverence," said I, "after such a permission, I am surprised that the first magistrates of the kingdom should know no better. For the first president has actually carried an order in Parliament to prevent certain clerks of court from taking money for that very sort of preference- a sign that he is far from thinking it allowable in judges; and everybody has applauded this as a reform of great benefit to all parties."

The worthy monk was surprised at this piece of intelligence, and replied: "Are you sure of that? I heard nothing about it. Our opinion, recollect, is only probable; the contrary is probable also."

"To tell you the truth, father," said I, "people think that the first president has acted more than probably well, and that he has thus put a stop to a course of public corruption which has been too long winked at."

"I am not far from being of the same mind," returned he; "but let us waive that point, and say no more about the judges."

"You are quite right, sir," said I; "indeed, they are not half thankful enough for all you have done for them."

"That is not my reason," said the father; "but there is so much to be said on all the different classes that we must study brevity on each of them. Let us now say a word or two about men of business. You are aware that our great difficulty with these gentlemen is to keep them from usury- an object to accomplish which our fathers have been at particular pains; for they hold this vice in such abhorrence

that Escobar declares ‘it is heresy to say that usury is no sin’; and Father Bauny has filled several pages of his Summary of Sins with the pains and penalties due to usurers. He declares them ‘infamous during their life, and unworthy of sepulture after their death.’”

“O dear! “ cried I, “I had no idea he was so severe.”

“He can be severe enough when there is occasion for it,” said the monk; “but then this learned casuist, having observed that some are allured into usury merely from the love of gain, remarks in the same place that ‘he would confer no small obligation on society, who, while he guarded it against the evil effects of usury, and of the sin which gives birth to it, would suggest a method by which one’s money might secure as large, if not a larger profit, in some honest and lawful employment than he could derive from usurious dealings.”

“Undoubtedly, father, there would be no more usurers after that.”

“Accordingly,” continued he, “our casuist has suggested ‘a general method for all sorts of persons- gentlemen, presidents, councillors,’ &c.; and a very simple process it is, consisting only in the use of certain words which must be pronounced by the person in the act of lending his money; after which he may take his interest for it without fear of being a usurer, which he certainly would be on any other plan.”

“And pray what may those mysterious words be, father?”

“I will give you them exactly in his own words,” said the father; “for he has written his Summary in French, you know, ‘that it may be understood by everybody,’ as he says in the preface: ‘The person from whom the loan is asked must answer, then, in this manner: I have got no money to lend, I have got a little, however, to lay out for an honest and lawful profit. If you are anxious to have the sum you mention in order to make something of it by your industry, dividing the profit and loss between us, I may perhaps be able to accommodate you. But now I think of it, as it may be a matter of difficulty to agree about the profit, if you will secure me a certain portion of it, and give me so much for my principal, so that it incur no risk, we may come to terms much sooner, and you shall touch the cash

immediately.' Is not that an easy plan for gaining money without sin? And has not Father Bauny good reason for concluding with these words: 'Such, in my opinion, is an excellent plan by which a great many people, who now provoke the just indignation of God by their usuries, extortions, and illicit bargains, might save themselves, in the way of making good, honest, and legitimate profits'?"

"O sir!" I exclaimed, "what potent words these must be! Doubtless they must possess some latent virtue to chase away the demon of usury which I know nothing of, for, in my poor judgement, I always thought that that vice consisted in recovering more money that what was lent."

"You know little about it indeed," he replied. "Usury, according to our fathers, consists in little more than the intention of taking the interest as usurious. Escobar, accordingly, shows you how you may avoid usury by a simple shift of the intention. 'It would be downright usury,' says he 'to take interest from the borrower, if we should exact it as due in point of justice; but if only exacted as due in point of gratitude, it is not usury. Again, it is not lawful to have directly the intention of profiting by the money lent; but to claim it through the medium of the benevolence of the borrower- media benevolentia- is not usury.' These are subtle methods; but, to my mind, the best of them all (for we have a great choice of them) is that of the Mohatra bargain."

"The Mohatra, father!"

"You are not acquainted with it, I see," returned he. "The name is the only strange thing about it. Escobar will explain it to you: 'The Mohatra bargain is effected by the needy person purchasing some goods at a high price and on credit, in order to sell them over again, at the same time and to the same merchant, for ready money and at a cheap rate.' This is what we call the Mohatra- a sort of bargain, you perceive, by which a person receives a certain sum of ready money by becoming bound to pay more."

"But, sir, I really think nobody but Escobar has employed such a term as that; is it to be found in any other book?"

“How little you do know of what is going on, to be sure!” cried the father. “Why, the last work on theological morality, printed at Paris this very year, speaks of the Mohatra, and learnedly, too. It is called Epilogus Summarum, and is an abridgment of all the summaries of divinity- extracted from Suarez, Sanchez, Lessius, Fagundez, Hurtado, and other celebrated casuists, as the title bears. There you will find it said, on , that ‘the Mohatra bargain takes place when a man who has occasion for twenty pistoles purchases from a merchant goods to the amount of thirty pistoles, payable within a year, and sells them back to him on the spot for twenty pistoles ready money.’ This shows you that the Mohatra is not such an unheard-of term as you supposed.”

“But, father, is that sort of bargain lawful?”

“Escobar,” replied he, “tells us in the same place that there are laws which prohibit it under very severe penalties.”

“It is useless, then, I suppose?”

“Not at all; Escobar, in the same passage, suggests expedients for making it lawful: ‘It is so, even though the principal intention both of the buyer and seller is to make money by the transaction, provided the seller, in disposing of the goods, does not exceed their highest price, and in re-purchasing them does not go below their lowest price, and that no previous bargain has been made, expressly or otherwise.’ Lessius, however, maintains that ‘even though the merchant has sold his goods, with the intention of re-purchasing them at the lowest price, he is not bound to make restitution of the profit thus acquired, unless, perhaps, as an act of charity, in the case of the person from whom it had been exacted being in poor circumstances, and not even then, if he cannot do it without inconvenience- si commode non potest.’ This is the utmost length to which they could go.”

“Indeed, sir,” said I, “any further indulgence would, I should think, be rather too much.”

“Oh, our fathers know very well when it is time for them to stop!” cried the monk. “So much, then, for the utility of the Mohatra. I might have mentioned several other methods, but these may suffice; and I have now to say a little in

regard to those who are in embarrassed circumstances. Our casuists have sought to relieve them, according to their condition of life. For, if they have not enough of property for a decent maintenance, and at the same time for paying their debts, they permit them to secure a portion by making a bankruptcy with their creditors. This has been decided by Lessius, and confirmed by Escobar, as follows: 'May a person who turns bankrupt, with a good conscience keep back as much of his personal estate as may be necessary to maintain his family in a respectable way- ne indecore vivat? I hold, with Lessius, that he may, even though he may have acquired his wealth unjustly and by notorious crimes- ex injustilia et notorio delicto; only, in this case, he is not at liberty to retain so large an amount as he otherwise might.'"

"Indeed, father! what a strange sort of charity is this, to allow property to remain in the hands of the man who has acquired it by rapine, to support him in his extravagance rather than go into the hands of his creditors, to whom it legitimately belongs!"

"It is impossible to please everybody," replied the father; "and we have made it our particular study to relieve these unfortunate people. This partiality to the poor has induced our great Vasquez, cited by Castro Palao, to say that 'if one saw a thief going to rob a poor man, it would be lawful to divert him from his purpose by pointing out to him some rich individual, whom he might rob in place of the other.' If you have not access to Vasquez or Castro Palao, you will find the same thing in your copy of Escobar; for, as you are aware, his work is little more than a compilation from twenty-four of the most celebrated of our fathers. You will find it in his treatise, entitled The Practice of our Society, in the Matter of Charity towards our Neighbours."

"A very singular kind of charity this," I observed, "to save one man from suffering loss, by inflicting it upon another! But I suppose that, to complete the charity, the charitable adviser would be bound in conscience to restore to the rich man the sum which he had made him lose?"

“Not at all, sir,” returned the monk; “for he did not rob the man- he only advised the other to do it. But only attend to this notable decision of Father Bauny, on a case which will still more astonish you, and in which you would suppose there was a much stronger obligation to make restitution. Here are his identical words: ‘A person asks a soldier to beat his neighbour, or to set fire to the barn of a man that has injured him. The question is whether, in the essence of the soldier, the person who employed him to commit these outrages is bound to make reparation out of his own pocket for the damage that has followed? My opinion is that he is not. For none can be held bound to restitution, where there has been no violation of justice; and is justice violated by asking another to do us a favour? As to the nature of the request which he made, he is at liberty either to acknowledge or deny it; to whatever side he may incline, it is a matter of mere choice; nothing obliges him to it, unless it may be the goodness, gentleness, and easiness of his disposition. If the soldier, therefore, makes no reparation for the mischief he has done, it ought not to be exacted from him at whose request he injured the innocent.’”

This sentence had very nearly broken up the whole conversation, for I was on the point of bursting into a laugh at the idea of the goodness and gentleness of a burner of barns, and at these strange sophisms which would exempt from the duty of restitution the principal and real incendiary, whom the civil magistrate would not exempt from the halter. But, had I not restrained myself, the worthy monk, who was perfectly serious, would have been displeased; he proceeded, therefore, without any alteration of countenance, in his observations.

“From such a mass of evidence, you ought to be satisfied now of the futility of your objections; but we are losing sight of our subject. To revert, then, to the succour which our fathers apply to persons in straitened circumstances, Lessius, among others, maintains that ‘it is lawful to steal, not only in a case of extreme necessity, but even where the necessity is grave, though not extreme.’”

“This is somewhat startling, father,” said I. “There are very few people in this world who do not consider their cases of necessity to be grave ones, and to whom,

accordingly, you would not give the right of stealing with a good conscience. And, though you should restrict the permission to those only who are really and truly in that condition, you open the door to an infinite number of petty larcenies which the magistrates would punish in spite of your grave necessity, and which you ought to repress on a higher principle- you who are bound by your office to be the conservators, not of justice only, but of charity between man and man, a grace which this permission would destroy. For after all, now, is it not a violation of the law of charity, and of our duty to our neighbour, to deprive a man of his property in order to turn it to our own advantage? Such, at least, is the way I have been taught to think hitherto."

"That will not always hold true," replied the monk; "for our great Molina has taught us that 'the rule of charity does not bind us to deprive ourselves of a profit, in order thereby to save our neighbour from a corresponding loss.' He advances this in corroboration of what he had undertaken to prove- 'that one is not bound in conscience to restore the goods which another had put into his hands in order to cheat his creditors.' Lessius holds the same opinion, on the same ground. Allow me to say, sir, that you have too little compassion for people in distress. Our fathers have had more charity than that comes to: they render ample justice to the poor, as well as the rich; and, I may add, to sinners as well as saints. For, though far from having any predilection for criminals, they do not scruple to teach that the property gained by crime may be lawfully retained. 'No person,' says Lessius, speaking generally, 'is bound, either by the law of nature or by positive laws (that is, by any law), to make restitution of what has been gained by committing a criminal action, such as adultery, even though that action is contrary to justice.' For, as Escobar comments on this writer, 'though the property which a woman acquires by adultery is certainly gained in an illicit way, yet once acquired, the possession of it is lawful- quamvis mulier illicite acquisat, licite tamen retinet acquisita.' It is on this principle that the most celebrated of our writers have formally decided that the bribe received by a judge from one of the parties who has a bad case, in order to procure an unjust decision in his favour, the money got

by a soldier for killing a man, or the emoluments gained by infamous crimes, may be legitimately retained. Escobar, who has collected this from a number of our authors, lays down this general rule on the point that ‘the means acquired by infamous courses, such as murder, unjust decisions, profligacy, &c., are legitimately possessed, and none are obliged to restore them.’ And, further, ‘they may dispose of what they have received for homicide, profligacy, &c., as they please; for the possession is just, and they have acquired a propriety in the fruits of their iniquity.’”

“My dear father,” cried I, “this is a mode of acquisition which I never heard of before; and I question much if the law will hold it good, or if it will consider assassination, injustice, and adultery, as giving valid titles to property.”

“I do not know what your law-books may say on the point,” returned the monk; “but I know well that our books, which are the genuine rules for conscience, bear me out in what I say. It is true they make one exception, in which restitution is positively enjoined; that is, in the case of any receiving money from those who have no right to dispose of their property such as minors and monks. ‘Unless,’ says the great Molina, ‘a woman has received money from one who cannot dispose’ of it, such as a monk or a minor- nisi mulier accepisset ab eo qui alienare non potest, ut a religioso et filio familias. In this case she must give back the money.’ And so says Escobar.”

“May it please your reverence,” said I, “the monks, I see, are more highly favoured in this way than other people.”

“By no means,” he replied; “have they not done as much generally for all minors, in which class monks may be viewed as continuing all their lives? It is barely an act of justice to make them an exception; but with regard to all other people, there is no obligation whatever to refund to them the money received from them for a criminal action. For, as has been amply shown by Lessius, ‘a wicked action may have its price fixed in money, by calculating the advantage received by the person who orders it to be done and the trouble taken by him who carries it into execution; on which account the latter is not bound to restore the

money he got for the deed, whatever that may have been- homicide, injustice, or a foul act' (for such are the illustrations which he uniformly employs in this question); 'unless he obtained the money from those having no right to dispose of their property. You may object, perhaps, that he who has obtained money for a piece of wickedness is sinning and, therefore, ought neither to receive nor retain it. But I reply that, after the thing is done, there can be no sin either in giving or in receiving payment for it.' The great Filiutius enters still more minutely into details, remarking 'that a man is bound in conscience to vary his payments for actions of this sort, according to the different conditions of the individuals who commit them, and some may bring a higher price than others.' This he confirms by very solid arguments."

He then pointed out to me, in his authors, some things of this nature so indelicate that I should be ashamed to repeat them; and indeed the monk himself, who is a good man, would have been horrified at them himself, were it not for the profound respect which he entertains for his fathers, and which makes him receive with veneration everything that proceeds from them. Meanwhile, I held my tongue, not so much with the view of allowing him to enlarge on this matter as from pure astonishment at finding the books of men in holy orders stuffed with sentiments at once so horrible, so iniquitous, and so silly. He went on, therefore, without interruption in his discourse, concluding as follows:

"From these premisses, our illustrious Molina decides the following question (and after this, I think you will have got enough): 'If one has received money to perpetrate a wicked action, is he obliged to restore it? We must distinguish here,' says this great man; 'if he has not done the deed, he must give back the cash; if he has, he is under no such obligation!' Such are some of our principles touching restitution. You have got a great deal of instruction to-day; and I should like, now, to see what proficiency you have made. Come, then, answer me this question: 'Is a judge, who has received a sum of money from one of the parties before him, in order to pronounce a judgement in his favour, obliged to make restitution?'"

"You were just telling me a little ago, father, that he was not."

“I told you no such thing,” replied the father; “did I express myself so generally? I told you he was not bound to make restitution, provided he succeeded in gaining the cause for the party who had the wrong side of the question. But if a man has justice on his side, would you have him to purchase the success of his cause, which is his legitimate right? You are very unconscionable. Justice, look you, is a debt which the judge owes, and therefore he cannot sell it; but he cannot be said to owe injustice, and therefore he may lawfully receive money for it. All our leading authors, accordingly, agree in teaching ‘that though a judge is bound to restore the money he had received for doing an act of justice, unless it was given him out of mere generosity, he is not obliged to restore what he has received from a man in whose favour he has pronounced an unjust decision.’”

This preposterous decision fairly dumbfounded me, and, while I was musing on its pernicious tendencies, the monk had prepared another question for me. “Answer me again,” said he, “with a little more circumspection. Tell me now, ‘if a man who deals in divination is obliged to make restitution of the money he has acquired in the exercise of his art?’”

“Just as you please, your reverence,” said I.

“Eh! what!- just as I please! Indeed, but you are a pretty scholar! It would seem, according to your way of talking, that the truth depended on our will and pleasure. I see that, in the present case, you would never find it out yourself: so I must send you to Sanchez for a solution of the problem- no less a man than Sanchez. In the first place, he makes a distinction between ‘the case of the diviner who has recourse to astrology and other natural means, and that of another who employs the diabolical art. In the one case, he says, the diviner is bound to make restitution; in the other he is not.’ Now, guess which of them is the party bound?”

“It is not difficult to find out that,” said I.

“I see what you mean to say,” he replied. “You think that he ought to make restitution in the case of his having employed the agency of demons. But you know nothing about it; it is just the reverse. ‘If,’ says Sanchez, ‘the sorcerer has not taken care and pains to discover, by means of the devil, what he could not

have known otherwise, he must make restitution- si nullam operam apposuit ut arte diaboli id sciret, but if he has been at that trouble, he is not obliged.'"

"And why so, father?"

"Don't you See?" returned he. "It is because men may truly divine by the aid of the devil, whereas astrology is a mere sham."

"But, sir, should the devil happen not to tell the truth (and he is not much more to be trusted than astrology), the magician must, I should think, for the same reason, be obliged to make restitution?"

"Not always," replied the monk: "Distinguo, as Sanchez says, here. If the magician be ignorant of the diabolic art- si sit artis diabolicae ignarus- he is bound to restore: but if he is an expert sorcerer, and has done all in his power to arrive at the truth, the obligation ceases; for the industry of such a magician may be estimated at a certain sum of money.'"

"There is some sense in that," I said; "for this is an excellent plan to induce sorcerers to aim at proficiency in their art, in the hope of making an honest livelihood, as you would say, by faithfully serving the public."

"You are making a jest of it, I suspect," said the father: "that is very wrong. If you were to talk in that way in places where you were not known, some people might take it amiss and charge you with turning sacred subjects into ridicule."

"That, father, is a charge from which I could very easily vindicate myself; for certain I am that whoever will be at the trouble to examine the true meaning of my words will find my object to be precisely the reverse; and perhaps, sir, before our conversations are ended, I may find an opportunity of making this very amply apparent."

"Ho, ho," cried the monk, "there is no laughing in your head now."

"I confess," said I, "that the suspicion that I intended to laugh at things sacred would be as painful for me to incur as it would be unjust in any to entertain it."

"I did not say it in earnest," returned the father; "but let us speak more seriously."

“I am quite disposed to do so, if you prefer it; that depends upon you, father. But I must say, that I have been astonished to see your friends carrying their attentions to all sorts and conditions of men so far as even to regulate the legitimate gains of sorcerers.”

“One cannot write for too many people,” said the monk, “nor be too minute in particularising cases, nor repeat the same things too often in different books. You may be convinced of this by the following anecdote, which is related by one of the gravest of our fathers, as you may well suppose, seeing he is our present Provincial- the reverend Father Cellot: ‘We know a person,’ says he, ‘who was carrying a large sum of money’ in his pocket to restore it, in obedience to the orders of his confessor, and who, stepping into a bookseller’s shop by the way, inquired if there was anything new?- numquid novi?- when the bookseller showed him a book on moral theology, recently published; and turning over the leaves carelessly, and without reflection, he lighted upon a passage describing his own case, and saw that he was under no obligation to make restitution: upon which, relieved from the burden of his scruples, he returned home with a purse no less heavy, and a heart much lighter, than when he left it- abjecta scrupuli sarcina, retento auri pondere, levior domum repetiit.’

“Say, after hearing that, if it is useful or not to know our maxims? Will you laugh at them now? or rather, are you not prepared to join with Father Cellot in the pious reflection which he makes on the blessedness of that incident? ‘Accidents of that kind,’ he remarks, ‘are, with God, the effect of his providence; with the guardian angel, the effect of his good guidance; with the individuals to whom they happen, the effect of their predestination. From all eternity, God decided that the golden chain of their salvation should depend on such and such an author, and not upon a hundred others who say the same thing, because they never happen to meet with them. Had that man not written, this man would not have been saved. All, therefore, who find fault with the multitude of our authors, we would beseech, in the bowels of Jesus Christ, to beware of envying others those books which the eternal election of God and the blood of Jesus Christ have

purchased for them!' Such are the eloquent terms in which this learned man proves successfully the proposition which he had advanced, namely, 'How useful it must be to have a great many writers on moral theology- quam utile sit de theologia morali multos scribere!'"

"Father," said I, "I shall defer giving you my opinion of that passage to another opportunity; in the meantime, I shall only say that as your maxims are so useful, and as it is so important to publish them, you ought to continue to give me further instruction in them. For I can assure you that the person to whom I send them shows my letters to a great many people. Not that we intend to avail ourselves of them in our own case; but, indeed, we think it will be useful for the world to be informed about them."

"Very well," rejoined the monk, "you see I do not conceal them; and, in continuation, I am ready to furnish you, at our next interview, with an account of the comforts and indulgences which our fathers allow, with the view of rendering salvation easy, and devotion agreeable; so that, in addition to what you have hitherto learned as to particular conditions of men, you may learn what applies in general to all classes, and thus you will have gone through a complete course of instruction." So saying, the monk took his leave of me. I am, &c.

P.S. I have always forgot to tell you that there are different editions of Escobar. Should you think of purchasing him, I would advise you to choose the Lyons edition, having on the title page the device of a lamb lying on a book sealed with seven seals; or the Brussels edition of 1651. Both of these are better and larger than the previous editions published at Lyons in the years 1644 and 1646.

LETTER IX



Paris, July 3, 1656

SIR,

I shall use as little ceremony with you as the worthy monk did with me when I saw him last. The moment he perceived me, he came forward, with his eyes fixed on a book which he held in his hand, and accosted me thus: "'Would you not be infinitely obliged to any one who should open to you the gates of paradise? Would you not give millions of gold to have a key by which you might gain admittance whenever you thought proper? You need not be at such expense; here is one- here are a hundred for much less money.'"

At first I was at a loss to know whether the good father was reading, or talking to me, but he soon put the matter beyond doubt by adding:

"These, sir, are the opening words of a fine book, written by Father Barry of our Society; for I never give you anything of my own."

"What book is it?" asked I.

"Here is its title," he replied: "Paradise opened to Philagio, in a Hundred Devotions to the Mother of God, easily practised."

"Indeed, father! and is each of these easy devotions a sufficient passport to heaven?"

"It is," returned he. "Listen to what follows: 'The devotions to the Mother of God, which you will find in this book, are so many celestial keys, which will open wide to you the gates of paradise, provided you practise them'; and, accordingly, he says at the conclusion, 'that he is satisfied if you practise only one of them.'"

"Pray, then, father, do teach me one of the easiest of them."

"They are all easy," he replied, "for example- 'Saluting the Holy Virgin when you happen to meet her image- saying the little chaplet of the pleasures of the

Virgin- fervently pronouncing the name of Mary- commissioning the angels to bow to her for us- wishing to build her as many churches as all the monarchs on earth have done- bidding her good morrow every morning, and good night in the evening- saying the Ave Maria every day, in honour of the heart of Mary'- which last devotion, he says, possesses the additional virtue of securing us the heart of the Virgin."

"But, father," said I, "only provided we give her our own in return, I presume?"

"That," he replied, "is not absolutely necessary, when a person is too much attached to the world. Hear Father Barry: 'Heart for heart would, no doubt, be highly proper; but yours is rather too much attached to the world, too much bound up in the creature, so that I dare not advise you to offer, at present, that poor little slave which you call your heart.' And so he contents himself with the Ave Maria which he had prescribed."

"Why, this is extremely easy work," said I, "and I should really think that nobody will be damned after that."

"Alas!" said the monk, "I see you have no idea of the hardness of some people's hearts. There are some, sir, who would never engage to repeat, every day, even these simple words, Good day, Good evening, just because such a practice would require some exertion of memory. And, accordingly, it became necessary for Father Barry to furnish them with expedients still easier, such as wearing a chaplet night and day on the arm, in the form of a bracelet, or carrying about one's person a rosary, or an image of the Virgin. 'And, tell me now,' as Father Barry says, 'if I have not provided you with easy devotions to obtain the good graces of Mary?'"

"Extremely easy indeed, father," I observed.

"Yes," he said, "it is as much as could possibly be done, and I think should be quite satisfactory. For he must be a wretched creature indeed, who would not spare a single moment in all his lifetime to put a chaplet on his arm, or a rosary in his pocket, and thus secure his salvation; and that, too, with so much certainty that

none who have tried the experiment have ever found it to fail, in whatever way they may have lived; though, let me add, we exhort people not to omit holy living. Let me refer you to the example of this, given at ; it is that of a female who, while she practised daily the devotion of saluting the images of the Virgin, spent all her days in mortal sin, and yet was saved after all, by the merit of that single devotion."

"And how so?" cried I.

"Our Saviour," he replied, "raised her up again, for the very purpose of showing it. So certain it is that none can perish who practise any one of these devotions."

"My dear sir," I observed, "I am fully aware that the devotions to the Virgin are a powerful means of salvation, and that the least of them, if flowing from the exercise of faith and charity, as in the case of the saints who have practised them, are of great merit; but to make persons believe that, by practising these without reforming their wicked lives, they will be converted by them at the hour of death, or that God will raise them up again, does appear calculated rather to keep sinners going on in their evil courses, by deluding them with false peace and foolhardy confidence, than to draw them off from sin by that genuine conversion which grace alone can effect."

"What does it matter," replied the monk, "by what road we enter paradise, provided we do enter it? as our famous Father Binet, formerly our Provincial, remarks on a similar subject, in his excellent book, On the Mark of Predestination. 'Be it by hook or by crook,' as he says, 'what need we care, if we reach at last the celestial city.'"

"Granted," said I; "but the great question is if we will get there at all."

"The Virgin will be answerable for that," returned he; "so says Father Barry in the concluding lines of his book: 'If at the hour of death, the enemy should happen to put in some claim upon you, and occasion disturbance in the little commonwealth of your thoughts, you have only to say that Mary will answer for you, and that he must make his application to her.'"

“But, father, it might be possible to puzzle you, were one disposed to push the question a little further. Who, for example, has assured us that the Virgin will be answerable in this case?”

“Father Barry will be answerable for her,” he replied. “‘As for the profit and happiness to be derived from these devotions,’ he says, ‘I will be answerable for that; I will stand bail for the good Mother.’”

“But, father, who is to be answerable for Father Barry?”

“How!” cried the monk; “for Father Barry? is he not a member of our Society; and do you need to be told that our Society is answerable for all the books of its members? It is highly necessary and important for you to know about this. There is an order in our Society, by which all booksellers are prohibited from printing any work of our fathers without the approbation of our divines and the permission of our superiors. This regulation was passed by Henry III, 10th May 1583, and confirmed by Henry IV, 20th December 1603, and by Louis XIII, 14th February 1612; so that the whole of our body stands responsible for the publications of each of the brethren. This is a feature quite peculiar to our community. And, in consequence of this, not a single work emanates from us which does not breathe the spirit of the Society. That, sir, is a piece of information quite apropos.”

“My good father,” said I, “you oblige me very much, and I only regret that I did not know this sooner, as it will induce me to pay considerably more attention to your authors.”

“I would have told you sooner,” he replied, “had an opportunity offered; I hope, however, you will profit by the information in future, and, in the meantime, let us prosecute our subject. The methods of securing salvation which I have mentioned are, in my opinion, very easy, very sure, and sufficiently numerous; but it was the anxious wish of our doctors that people should not stop short at this first step, where they only do what is absolutely necessary for salvation and nothing more. Aspiring, as they do without ceasing, after the greater glory of God, they sought to elevate men to a higher pitch of piety; and, as men of the world are generally deterred from devotion by the strange ideas they have been led to form

of it by some people, we have deemed it of the highest importance to remove this obstacle which meets us at the threshold. In this department Father Le Moine has acquired much fame, by his work entitled Devotion Made Easy, composed for this very purpose. The picture which he draws of devotion in this work is perfectly charming. None ever understood the subject before him. Only hear what he says in the beginning of his work: 'Virtue has never as yet been seen aright; no portrait of her hitherto produced, has borne the least verisimilitude. It is by no means surprising that so few have attempted to scale her rocky eminence. She has been held up as a cross-tempered dame, whose only delight is in solitude; she has been associated with toil and sorrow; and, in short, represented as the foe of sports and diversions, which are, in fact, the flowers of joy and the seasoning of life.'"

"But, father, I am sure, I have heard, at least, that there have been great saints who led extremely austere lives."

"No doubt of that," he replied; "but still, to use the language of the doctor, 'there have always been a number of genteel saints, and well-bred devotees'; and this difference in their manners, mark you, arises entirely from a difference of humours. 'I am far from denying,' says my author, 'that there are devout persons to be met with, pale and melancholy in their temperament, fond of silence and retirement, with phlegm instead of blood in their veins, and with faces of clay; but there are many others of a happier complexion, and who possess that sweet and warm humour, that genial and rectified blood, which is the true stuff that joy is made of.'

"You see," resumed the monk, "that the love of silence and retirement is not common to all devout people; and that, as I was saying, this is the effect rather of their complexion than their piety. Those austere manners to which you refer are, in fact, properly the character of a savage and barbarian, and, accordingly, you will find them ranked by Father Le Moine among the ridiculous and brutal manners of a moping idiot. The following is the description he has drawn of one of these in the seventh book of his Moral Pictures. 'He has no eyes for the beauties of art or nature. Were he to indulge in anything that gave him pleasure,

he would consider himself oppressed with a grievous load. On festival days, he retires to hold fellowship with the dead. He delights in a grotto rather than a palace, and prefers the stump of a tree to a throne. As to injuries and affronts, he is as insensible to them as if he had the eyes and ears of a statue. Honour and glory are idols with whom he has no acquaintance, and to whom he has no incense to offer. To him a beautiful woman is no better than a spectre; and those imperial and commanding looks- those charming tyrants who hold so many slaves in willing and chainless servitude- have no more influence over his optics than the sun over those of owls,' &c."

"Reverend sir," said I, "had you not told me that Father Le Moine was the author of that description, I declare I would have guessed it to be the production of some profane fellow who had drawn it expressly with the view of turning the saints into ridicule. For if that is not the picture of a man entirely denied to those feelings which the Gospel obliges us to renounce, I confess that I know nothing of the matter."

"You may now perceive, then, the extent of your ignorance," he replied; "for these are the features of a feeble, uncultivated mind, 'destitute of those virtuous and natural affections which it ought to possess,' as Father Le Moine says at the close of that description. Such is his way of teaching 'Christian virtue and philosophy,' as he announces in his advertisement; and, in truth, it cannot be denied that this method of treating devotion is much more agreeable to the taste of the world than the old way in which they went to work before our times."

"There can be no comparison between them," was my reply, "and I now begin to hope that you will be as good as your word."

"You will see that better by-and-by," returned the monk. "Hitherto I have only spoken of piety in general, but, just to show you more in detail how our fathers have disencumbered it of its toils and troubles, would it not be most consoling to the ambitious to learn that they may maintain genuine devotion along with an inordinate love of greatness?"

"What, father! even though they should run to the utmost excess of ambition?"

“Yes,” he replied; “for this would be only a venial sin, unless they sought after greatness in order to offend God and injure the State more effectually. Now venial sins do not preclude a man from being devout, as the greatest saints are not exempt from them. ‘Ambition,’ says Escobar, ‘which consists in an inordinate appetite for place and power, is of itself a venial sin; but when such dignities are coveted for the purpose of hurting the commonwealth, or having more opportunity to offend God, these adventitious circumstances render it mortal.’”

“Very savoury doctrine, indeed, father.”

“And is it not still more savoury,” continued the monk, “for misers to be told, by the same authority, ‘that the rich are not guilty of mortal sin by refusing to give alms out of their superfluity to the poor in the hour of their greatest need?- scio in gravi pauperum necessitate divites non dando superflua, non peccare mortaliter.’”

“Why truly,” said I, “if that be the case, I give up all pretension to skill in the science of sins.”

“To make you still more sensible of this,” returned he, “you have been accustomed to think, I suppose, that a good opinion of one’s self, and a complacency in one’s own works, is a most dangerous sin? Now, will you not be surprised if I can show you that such a good opinion, even though there should be no foundation for it, is so far from being a sin that it is, on the contrary, the gift of God?”

“Is it possible, father?”

“That it is,” said the monk; “and our good Father Garasse shows it in his French work, entitled Summary of the Capital Truths of Religion: ‘It is a result of commutative justice that all honest labour should find its recompense either in praise or in self-satisfaction. When men of good talents publish some excellent work, they are justly remunerated by public applause. But when a man of weak parts has wrought hard at some worthless production, and fails to obtain the praise of the public, in order that his labour may not go without its reward, God imparts to him a personal satisfaction, which it would be worse than barbarous injustice to

envy him. It is thus that God, who is infinitely just, has given even to frogs a certain complacency in their own croaking.'"

"Very fine decisions in favour of vanity, ambition, and avarice!" cried I; "and envy, father, will it be more difficult to find an excuse for it?"

"That is a delicate point," he replied. "We require to make use here of Father Bauny's distinction, which he lays down in his Summary of Sins.- 'Envy of the spiritual good of our neighbour is mortal but envy of his temporal good is only venial.'"

"And why so, father?"

"You shall hear, said he. "'For the good that consists in temporal things is so slender, and so insignificant in relation to heaven, that it is of no consideration in the eyes of God and His saints.'"

"But, father, if temporal good is so slender, and of so little consideration, how do you come to permit men's lives to be taken away in order to preserve it?"

"You mistake the matter entirely," returned the monk; "you were told that temporal good was of no consideration in the eyes of God, but not in the eyes of men."

"That idea never occurred to me," I replied; "and now, it is to be hoped that, in virtue of these same distinctions, the world will get rid of mortal sins altogether."

"Do not flatter yourself with that," said the father; "there are still such things as mortal sins- there is sloth, for example."

"Nay, then, father dear!" I exclaimed, "after that, farewell to all 'the joys of life!'"

"Stay," said the monk, "when you have heard Escobar's definition of that vice, you will perhaps change your tone: 'Sloth,' he observes, 'lies in grieving that spiritual things are spiritual, as if one should lament that the sacraments are the sources of grace; which would be a mortal sin.'"

"O my dear sir!" cried I, "I don't think that anybody ever took it into his head to be slothful in that way."

“And accordingly,” he replied, “Escobar afterwards remarks: ‘I must confess that it is very rarely that a person falls into the sin of sloth.’ You see now how important it is to define things properly?”

“Yes, father, and this brings to my mind your other definitions about assassinations, ambuscades, and superfluities. But why have you not extended your method to all cases, and given definitions of all vices in your way, so that people may no longer sin in gratifying themselves?”

“It is not always essential,” he replied, “to accomplish that purpose by changing the definitions of things. I may illustrate this by referring to the subject of good cheer, which is accounted one of the greatest pleasures of life, and which Escobar thus sanctions in his Practice according to our Society: ‘Is it allowable for a person to eat and drink to repletion, unnecessarily, and solely for pleasure? Certainly he may, according to Sanchez, provided he does not thereby injure his health; because the natural appetite may be permitted to enjoy its proper functions.’”

“Well, father, that is certainly the most complete passage, and the most finished maxim in the whole of your moral system! What comfortable inferences may be drawn from it! Why, and is gluttony, then, not even a venial sin?”

“Not in the shape I have just referred to,” he replied; “but, according to the same author, it would be a venial sin ‘were a person to gorge himself, unnecessarily, with eating and drinking, to such a degree as to produce vomiting.’ So much for that point. I would now say a little about the facilities we have invented for avoiding sin in worldly conversations and intrigues. One of the most embarrassing of these cases is how to avoid telling lies, particularly when one is anxious to induce a belief in what is false. In such cases, our doctrine of equivocations has been found of admirable service, according to which, as Sanchez has it, ‘it is permitted to use ambiguous terms, leading people to understand them in another sense from that in which we understand them ourselves.’”

“I know that already, father,” said I.

“We have published it so often,” continued he, “that at length, it seems, everybody knows of it. But do you know what is to be done when no equivocal words can be got?”

“No, father.”

“I thought as much, said the Jesuit; “this is something new, sir: I mean the doctrine of mental reservations. ‘A man may swear,’ as Sanchez says in the same place, ‘that he never did such a thing (though he actually did it), meaning within himself that he did not do so on a certain day, or before he was born, or understanding any other such circumstance, while the words which he employs have no such sense as would discover his meaning. And this is very convenient in many cases, and quite innocent, when necessary or conducive to one’s health, honour, or advantage.’”

“Indeed, father! is that not a lie, and perjury to boot?”

“No,” said the father; “Sanchez and Filiutius prove that it is not; for, says the latter, ‘it is the intention that determines the quality of the action.’ And he suggests a still surer method for avoiding falsehood, which is this: After saying aloud, ‘I swear that I have not done that,’ to add, in a low voice, ‘to-day’; or after saying aloud, ‘I swear,’ to interpose in a whisper, ‘that I say,’ and then continue aloud, ‘that I have done that.’ This, you perceive, is telling the truth.”

“I grant it,” said I; “it might possibly, however, be found to be telling the truth in a low key, and falsehood in a loud one; besides, I should be afraid that many people might not have sufficient presence of mind to avail themselves of these methods.”

“Our doctors,” replied the Jesuit, “have taught, in the same passage, for the benefit of such as might not be expert in the use of these reservations, that no more is required of them, to avoid lying, than simply to say that ‘they have not done’ what they have done, provided ‘they have, in general, the intention of giving to their language the sense which an able man would give to it.’ Be candid, now, and confess if you have not often felt yourself embarrassed, in consequence of not knowing this?”

“Sometimes,” said I.

“And will you not also acknowledge,” continued he, “that it would often prove very convenient to be absolved in conscience from keeping certain engagements one may have made?”

“The most convenient thing in the world!” I replied.

“Listen, then, to the general rule laid down by Escobar: ‘Promises are not binding, when the person in making them had no intention to bind himself. Now, it seldom happens that any have such an intention, unless when they confirm their promises by an oath or contract; so that when one simply says, “I will do it,” he means that he will do it if he does not change his mind; for he does not wish, by saying that, to deprive himself of his liberty.’ He gives other rules in the same strain, which you may consult for yourself, and tells us, in conclusion, ‘that all this is taken from Molina and our other authors, and is therefore settled beyond all doubt.’”

“My dear father,” I observed, “I had no idea that the direction of the intention possessed the power of rendering promises null and void.”

“You must perceive,” returned he, “what facility this affords for prosecuting the business of life. But what has given us the most trouble has been to regulate the commerce between the sexes; our fathers being more chary in the matter of chastity. Not but that they have discussed questions of a very curious and very indulgent character, particularly in reference to married and betrothed persons.”

At this stage of the conversation I was made acquainted with the most extraordinary questions you can well imagine. He gave me enough of them to fill many letters; but, as you show my communications to all sorts of persons, and as I do not choose to be the vehicle of such reading to those who would make it the subject of diversion, I must decline even giving the quotations.

The only thing to which I can venture to allude, out of all the books which he showed me, and these in French, too, is a passage which you will find in Father Bauny’s Summary, , relating to certain little familiarities, which, provided the intention is well directed, he explains “as passing for gallant”; and you will be

surprised to find, on a principle of morals, as to the power which daughters have to dispose of their persons without the leave of their relatives, couched in these terms: “When that is done with the consent of the daughter, although the father may have reason to complain, it does not follow that she, or the person to whom she has sacrificed her honour, has done him any wrong, or violated the rules of justice in regard to him; for the daughter has possession of her honour, as well as of her body, and can do what she pleases with them, bating death or mutilation of her members.” Judge, from that specimen, of the rest. It brings to my recollection a passage from a heathen poet, a much better casuist, it would appear, than these reverend doctors; for he says, “that the person of a daughter does not belong wholly to herself, but partly to her father and partly to her mother, without whom she cannot dispose of it, even in marriage.” And I am much mistaken if there is a single judge in the land who would not lay down as law the very reverse of this maxim of Father Bauny.

This is all I dare tell you of this part of our conversation, which lasted so long that I was obliged to beseech the monk to change the subject. He did so and proceeded to entertain me with their regulations about female attire.

“We shall not speak,” he said, “of those who are actuated by impure intentions; but, as to others, Escobar remarks that ‘if the woman adorn herself without any evil intention, but merely to gratify a natural inclination to vanity- ob naturalem fastus inclinationem- this is only a venial sin, or rather no sin at all.’ And Father Bauny maintains, that ‘even though the woman knows the bad effect which her care in adorning her person may have upon the virtue of those who may behold her, all decked out in rich and precious attire, she would not sin in so dressing.’ And, among others, he cites our Father Sanchez as being of the same mind.”

“But, father, what do your authors say to those passages of Scripture which so strongly denounce everything of that sort?”

“Lessius has well met that objection,” said the monk, “by observing, ‘that these passages of Scripture have the force of precepts only in regard to the women

of that period, who were expected to exhibit, by their modest demeanour, an example of edification to the Pagans.'"

"And where did he find that, father"?

"It does not matter where he found it," replied he; "it is enough to know that the sentiments of these great men are always probable of themselves. It deserves to be noticed, however, that Father Le Moine has qualified this general permission; for he will on no account allow it to be extended to the old ladies. 'Youth,' he observes, 'is naturally entitled to adorn itself, nor can the use of ornament be condemned at an age which is the flower and verdure of life. But there it should be allowed to remain: it would be strangely out of season to seek for roses on the snow. The stars alone have a right to be always dancing, for they have the gift of perpetual youth. The wisest course in this matter, therefore, for old women, would be to consult good sense and a good mirror, to yield to decency and necessity, and to retire at the first approach of the shades of night.'"

"A most judicious advice," I observed.

"But," continued the monk, "just to show you how careful our fathers are about everything you can think of, I may mention that, after granting the ladies permission to gamble, and foreseeing that, in many cases, this license would be of little avail unless they had something to gamble with, they have established another maxim in their favour, which will be found in Escobar's chapter on larceny, no. 13: 'A wife,' says he, 'may gamble, and for this purpose may pilfer money from her husband.'"

"Well, father, that is capital!

"There are many other good things besides that," said the father; "but we must waive them and say a little about those more important maxims, which facilitate the practice of holy things- the manner of attending mass, for example. On this subject, our great divines, Gaspard Hurtado and Coninck, have taught 'that it is quite sufficient to be present at mass in body, though we may be absent in spirit, provided we maintain an outwardly respectful deportment.' Vasquez goes a step further, maintaining 'that one fulfils the precept of hearing mass, even though one

should go with no such intention at all.' All this is repeatedly laid down by Escobar, who, in one passage, illustrates the point by the example of those who are dragged to mass by force, and who put on a fixed resolution not to listen to it."

"Truly, sir," said I, "had any other person told me that, I would not have believed it."

"In good sooth," he replied, "it requires all the support which the authority of these great names can lend it; and so does the following maxim by the same Escobar, 'that even a wicked intention, such as that of ogling the women, joined to that of hearing mass rightly, does not hinder a man from fulfilling the service.' But another very convenient device, suggested by our learned brother Turrian, is that 'one may hear the half of a mass from one priest, and the other half from another; and that it makes no difference though he should hear first the conclusion of the one, and then the commencement of the other.' I might also mention that it has been decided by several of our doctors to be lawful 'to hear the two halves of a mass at the same time, from the lips of two different priests, one of whom is commencing the mass, while the other is at the elevation; it being quite possible to attend to both parties at once, and two halves of a mass making a whole- duae medietates unam missam constituunt.' 'From all which,' says Escobar, 'I conclude, that you may hear mass in a very short period of time; if, for example, you should happen to hear four masses going on at the same time, so arranged that when the first is at the commencement, the second is at the gospel, the third at the consecration, and the last at the communion.'"

"Certainly, father, according to that plan, one may hear mass any day at Notre Dame in a twinkling."

"Well," replied he, "that just shows how admirably we have succeeded in facilitating the hearing of mass. But I am anxious now to show you how we have softened the use of the sacraments, and particularly that of penance. It is here that the benignity of our fathers shines in its truest splendour; and you will be really astonished to find that devotion, a thing which the world is so much afraid of,

should have been treated by our doctors with such consummate skill that, to use the words of Father Le Moine, in his Devotion Made Easy, demolishing the bugbear which the devil had placed at its threshold, they have rendered it easier than vice and more agreeable than pleasure; so that, in fact, simply to live is incomparably more irksome than to live well. Is that not a marvellous change, now?"

"Indeed, father, I cannot help telling you a bit of my mind: I am sadly afraid that you have overshot the mark, and that this indulgence of yours will shock more people than it will attract. The mass, for example, is a thing so grand and so holy that, in the eyes of a great many, it would be enough to blast the credit of your doctors forever to show them how you have spoken of it."

"With a certain class," replied the monk, "I allow that may be the case; but do you not know that we accommodate ourselves to all sorts of persons? You seem to have lost all recollection of what I have repeatedly told you on this point. The first time you are at leisure, therefore, I propose that we make this the theme of our conversation, deferring till then the lenitives we have introduced into the confessional. I promise to make you understand it so well that you will never forget it."

With these words we parted, so that our next conversation, I presume, will turn on the policy of the Society. I am, &c.

P.S. Since writing the above, I have seen Paradise Opened by a Hundred Devotions Easily Practised, by Father Barry; and also the Mark of Predestination, by Father Binet; both of them pieces well worth the seeing.

LETTER X



Paris, August 2, 1656

SIR,

I have not come yet to the policy of the Society, but shall first introduce you to one of its leading principles. I refer to the palliatives which they have applied to confession, and which are unquestionably the best of all the schemes they have fallen upon to "attract all and repel none." It is absolutely necessary to know something of this before going any further; and, accordingly, the monk judged it expedient to give me some instructions on the point, nearly as follows:

"From what I have already stated," he observed, "you may judge of the success with which our doctors have laboured to discover, in their wisdom, that a great many things, formerly regarded as forbidden, are innocent and allowable; but as there are some sins for which one can find no excuse, and for which there is no remedy but confession, it became necessary to alleviate, by the methods I am now going to mention, the difficulties attending that practice. Thus, having shown you, in our previous conversations, how we relieve people from troublesome scruples of conscience by showing them that what they believed to be sinful was indeed quite innocent, I proceed now to illustrate our convenient plan for expiating what is really sinful, which is effected by making confession as easy a process as it was formerly a painful one."

"And how do you manage that, father?"

"Why," said he, "it is by those admirable subtleties which are peculiar to our Company, and have been styled by our fathers in Flanders, in The Image of the First Century, 'the pious finesse, the holy artifice of devotion- piam et religiosam calliditatem, et pietatis solertiam.' By the aid of these inventions, as they remark in the same place, 'crimes may be expiated nowadays alacrius- with more zeal

and alacrity than they were committed in former days, and a great many people may be washed from their stains almost as cleverly as they contracted them- plurimi vix citius maculas contrahunt quam eluunt.’”

“Pray, then, father, do teach me some of these most salutary lessons of finesse.”

“We have a good number of them, answered the monk; “for there are a great many irksome things about confession, and for each of these we have devised a palliative. The chief difficulties connected with this ordinance are the shame of confessing certain sins, the trouble of specifying the circumstances of others, the penance exacted for them, the resolution against relapsing into them, the avoidance of the proximate occasions of sins, and the regret for having committed them. I hope to convince you to-day that it is now possible to get over all this with hardly any trouble at all; such is the care we have taken to allay the bitterness and nauseousness of this very necessary medicine. For, to begin with the difficulty of confessing certain sins, you are aware it is of importance often to keep in the good graces of one’s confessor; now, must it not be extremely convenient to be permitted, as you are by our doctors, particularly Escobar and Suarez, ‘to have two confessors, one for the mortal sins and another for the venial, in order to maintain a fair character with your ordinary confessor- uti bonam famam apud ordinarium tueatur- provided you do not take occasion from thence to indulge in mortal sin?’ This is followed by another ingenious contrivance for confessing a sin, even to the ordinary confessor, without his perceiving that it was committed since the last confession, which is, ‘to make a general confession, and huddle this last sin in a lump among the rest which we confess.’ And I am sure you will own that the following decision of Father Bauny goes far to alleviate the shame which one must feel in confessing his relapses, namely, ‘that, except in certain cases, which rarely occur, the confessor is not entitled to ask his penitent if the sin of which he accuses himself is an habitual one, nor is the latter obliged to answer such a question; because the confessor has no right to subject his penitent to the shame of disclosing his frequent relapses.’”

“Indeed, father! I might as well say that a physician has no right to ask his patient if it is long since he had the fever. Do not sins assume quite a different aspect according to circumstances? and should it not be the object of a genuine penitent to discover the whole state of his conscience to his confessor, with the same sincerity and open-heartedness as if he were speaking to Jesus Christ himself, whose place the priest occupies? If so, how far is he from realizing such a disposition who, by concealing the frequency of his relapses, conceals the aggravations of his offence!”

I saw that this puzzled the worthy monk, for he attempted to elude rather than resolve the difficulty by turning my attention to another of their rules, which only goes to establish a fresh abuse, instead of justifying in the least the decision of Father Bauny; a decision which, in my opinion, is one of the most pernicious of their maxims, and calculated to encourage profligate men to continue in their evil habits.

“I grant you,” replied the father, “that habit aggravates the malignity of a sin, but it does not alter its nature; and that is the reason why we do not insist on people confessing it, according to the rule laid down by our fathers, and quoted by Escobar, ‘that one is only obliged to confess the circumstances that alter the species of the sin, and not those that aggravate it.’ Proceeding on this rule, Father Granados says, ‘that if one has eaten flesh in Lent, all he needs to do is to confess that he has broken the fast, without specifying whether it was by eating flesh, or by taking two fish meals.’ And, according to Reginald, ‘a sorcerer who has employed the diabolical art is not obliged to reveal that circumstance; it is enough to say that he has dealt in magic, without expressing whether it was by palmistry or by a paction with the devil.’ Fagundez, again, has decided that ‘rape is not a circumstance which one is bound to reveal, if the woman give her consent.’ All this is quoted by Escobar, with many other very curious decisions as to these circumstances, which you may consult at your leisure.”

“These ‘artifices of devotion’ are vastly convenient in their way,” I observed.

“And yet,” said the father, “notwithstanding all that, they would go for nothing, sir, unless we had proceeded to mollify penance, which, more than anything else, deters people from confession. Now, however, the most squeamish have nothing to dread from it, after what we have advanced in our theses of the College of Clermont, where we hold that, if the confessor imposes a suitable penance, and the penitent be unwilling to submit himself to it, the latter may go home, ‘waiving both the penance and the absolution.’ Or, as Escobar says, in giving the Practice of our Society, ‘if the penitent declare his willingness to have his penance remitted to the next world, and to suffer in purgatory all the pains due to him, the confessor may, for the honour of the sacrament, impose a very light penance on him, particularly if he has reason to believe that this penitent would object to a heavier one.’”

“I really think,” said I, “that, if that is the case, we ought no longer to call confession the sacrament of penance.”

“You are wrong,” he replied; “for we always administer something in the way of penance, for the form’s sake.”

“But, father, do you suppose that a man is worthy of receiving absolution when he will submit to nothing painful to expiate his offences? And, in these circumstances, ought you not to retain rather than remit their sins? Are you not aware of the extent of your ministry, and that you have the power of binding and loosing? Do you imagine that you are at liberty to give absolution indifferently to all who ask it, and without ascertaining beforehand if Jesus Christ looses in heaven those whom you loose on earth?”

“What!” cried the father, “do you suppose that we do not know that ‘the confessor (as one remarks) ought to sit in judgement on the disposition of his penitent, both because he is bound not to dispense the sacraments to the unworthy, Jesus Christ having enjoined him to be a faithful steward and not give that which is holy unto dogs; and because he is a judge, and it is the duty of a judge to give righteous judgement, by loosing the worthy and binding the unworthy, and he ought not to absolve those whom Jesus Christ condemns.’

“Whose words are these, father?”

“They are the words of our father Filiutius,” he replied.

“You astonish me,” said I; “I took them to be a quotation from one of the fathers of the Church. At all events, sir, that passage ought to make an impression on the confessors, and render them very circumspect in the dispensation of this sacrament, to ascertain whether the regret of their penitents is sufficient, and whether their promises of future amendment are worthy of credit.”

“That is not such a difficult matter,” replied the father; “Filiutius had more sense than to leave confessors in that dilemma, and accordingly he suggests an easy way of getting out of it, in the words immediately following: ‘The confessor may easily set his mind at rest as to the disposition of his penitent; for, if he fail to give sufficient evidence of sorrow, the confessor has only to ask him if he does not detest the sin in his heart, and, if he answers that he does, he is bound to believe it. The same thing may be said of resolutions as to the future, unless the case involves an obligation to restitution, or to avoid some proximate occasion of sin.’”

“As to that passage, father, I can easily believe that it is Filiutius’ own.”

“You are mistaken though,” said the father, “for he has extracted it, word for word, from Suarez.”

“But, father, that last passage from Filiutius overturns what he had laid down in the former. For confessors can no longer be said to sit as judges on the disposition of their penitents, if they are bound to take it simply upon their word, in the absence of all satisfying signs of contrition. Are the professions made on such occasions so infallible, that no other sign is needed? I question much if experience has taught your fathers that all who make fair promises are remarkable for keeping them; I am mistaken if they have not often found the reverse.”

“No matter,” replied the monk; “confessors are bound to believe them for all that; for Father Bauny, who has probed this question to the bottom, has concluded ‘that at whatever time those who have fallen into frequent relapses, without giving evidence of amendment, present themselves before a confessor, expressing

their regret for the past, and a good purpose for the future, he is bound to believe them on their simple averment, although there may be reason to presume that such resolution only came from the teeth outwards. Nay,' says he, 'though they should indulge subsequently to greater excess than ever in the same delinquencies, still, in my opinion, they may receive absolution.' There now! that, I am sure, should silence you."

"But, father," said I, "you impose a great hardship, I think, on the confessors, by thus obliging them to believe the very reverse of what they see."

"You don't understand it," returned he; "all that is meant is that they are obliged to act and absolve as if they believed that their penitents would be true to their engagements, though, in point of fact, they believe no such thing. This is explained, immediately afterwards, by Suarez and Filiutius. After having said that 'the priest is bound to believe the penitent on his word,' they add: 'It is not necessary that the confessor should be convinced that the good resolution of his penitent will be carried into effect, nor even that he should judge it probable; it is enough that he thinks the person has at the time the design in general, though he may very shortly after relapse. Such is the doctrine of all our authors- ita docent omnes autores.' Will you presume to doubt what has been taught by our authors?"

"But, sir, what then becomes of what Father Petau himself is obliged to own, in the preface to his Public Penance, 'that the holy fathers, doctors, and councils of the Church agree in holding it as a settled point that the penance preparatory to the eucharist must be genuine, constant, resolute, and not languid and sluggish, or subject to after-thoughts and relapses?'"

"Don't you observe," replied the monk, "that Father Petau is speaking of the ancient Church? But all that is now so little in season, to use a common saying of our doctors, that, according to Father Bauny, the reverse is the only true view of the matter. 'There are some,' says he, 'who maintain that absolution ought to be refused to those who fall frequently into the same sin, more especially if, after being often absolved, they evince no signs of amendment; and others hold the opposite view. But the only true opinion is that they ought not to be refused

absolution; and, though they should be nothing the better of all the advice given them, though they should have broken all their promises to lead new lives, and been at no trouble to purify themselves, still it is of no consequence; whatever may be said to the contrary, the true opinion which ought to be followed is that even in all these cases, they ought to be absolved.' And again: 'Absolution ought neither to be denied nor delayed in the case of those who live in habitual sins against the law of God, of nature, and of the Church, although there should be no apparent prospect of future amendment- etsi emendationis futurae nulla spes appareat.'"

"But, father, this certainty of always getting absolution may induce sinners-"

"I know what you mean," interrupted the Jesuit; "but listen to Father Bauny, Q. 15: 'Absolution may be given even to him who candidly avows that the hope of being absolved induced him to sin with more freedom than he would otherwise have done.' And Father Caussin, defending this proposition, says 'that, were this not true, confession would be interdicted to the greater part of mankind; and the only resource left poor sinners would be a branch and a rope.'"

"O father, how these maxims of yours will draw people to your confessionals!"

"Yes, he replied, "you would hardly believe what numbers are in the habit of frequenting them; 'we are absolutely oppressed and overwhelmed, so to speak, under the crowd of our penitents- penitentium numero obruimur'- as is said in The Image of the First Century."

"I could suggest a very simple method," said I, "to escape from this inconvenient pressure. You have only to oblige sinners to avoid the proximate occasions of sin; that single expedient would afford you relief at once."

"We have no wish for such a relief," rejoined the monk; "quite the reverse; for, as is observed in the same book, 'the great end of our Society is to labor to establish the virtues, to wage war on the vices, and to save a great number of souls.' Now, as there are very few souls inclined to quit the proximate occasions of sin, we have been obliged to define what a proximate occasion is. 'That cannot be called a proximate occasion,' says Escobar, 'where one sins but rarely, or on a

sudden transport- say three or four times a year'; or, as Father Bauny has it, once or twice in a month.' Again, asks this author, 'what is to be done in the case of masters and servants, or cousins, who, living under the same roof, are by this occasion tempted to sin?'"

"They ought to be separated," said I.

"That is what he says, too, 'if their relapses be very frequent: but if the parties offend rarely, and cannot be separated without trouble and loss, they may, according to Suarez and other authors, be absolved, provided they promise to sin no more, and are truly sorry for what is past.'"

This required no explanation, for he had already informed me with what sort of evidence of contrition the confessor was bound to rest satisfied.

"And Father Bauny," continued the monk, "permits those who are involved in the proximate occasions of sin, 'to remain as they are, when they cannot avoid them without becoming the common talk of the world, or subjecting themselves to inconvenience.' 'A priest,' he remarks in another work, 'may and ought to absolve a woman who is guilty of living with a paramour, if she cannot put him away honourably, or has some reason for keeping him- si non potest honeste ejicere, aut habeat aliquam causam retinendi- provided she promises to act more virtuously for the future.'"

"Well, father," cried I, "you have certainly succeeded in relaxing the obligation of avoiding the occasions of sin to a very comfortable extent, by dispensing with the duty as soon as it becomes inconvenient; but I should think your fathers will at least allow it be binding when there is no difficulty in the way of its performance?"

"Yes," said the father, "though even then the rule is not without exceptions. For Father Bauny says, in the same place, 'that any one may frequent profligate houses, with the view of converting their unfortunate inmates, though the probability should be that he fall into sin, having often experienced before that he has yielded to their fascinations. Some doctors do not approve of this opinion, and

hold that no man may voluntarily put his salvation in peril to succour his neighbor; yet I decidedly embrace the opinion which they controvert.'"

"A novel sort of preachers these, father! But where does Father Bauny find any ground for investing them with such a mission?"

"It is upon one of his own principles," he replied, "which he announces in the same place after Basil Ponce. I mentioned it to you before, and I presume you have not forgotten it. It is, 'that one may seek an occasion of sin, directly and expressly- primo et per se- to promote the temporal or spiritual good of himself or his neighbour.'"

On hearing these passages, I felt so horrified that I was on the point of breaking out; but, being resolved to hear him to an end, I restrained myself, and merely inquired: "How, father, does this doctrine comport with that of the Gospel, which binds us to 'pluck out the right eye,' and 'cut off the right hand,' when they 'offend,' or prove prejudicial to salvation? And how can you suppose that the man who wilfully indulges in the occasions of sins, sincerely hates sin? Is it not evident, on the contrary, that he has never been properly touched with a sense of it, and that he has not yet experienced that genuine conversion of heart, which makes a man love God as much as he formerly loved the creature?"

"Indeed!" cried he, "do you call that genuine contrition? It seems you do not know that, as Father Pintereau says, 'all our fathers teach, with one accord, that it is an error, and almost a heresy, to hold that contrition is necessary; or that attrition alone, induced by the sole motive, the fear of the pains of hell, which excludes a disposition to offend, is not sufficient with the sacrament?'"

"What, father! do you mean to say that it is almost an article of faith that attrition, induced merely by fear of punishment, is sufficient with the sacrament? That idea, I think, is peculiar to your fathers; for those other doctors who hold that attrition is sufficient along with the sacrament, always take care to show that it must be accompanied with some love to God at least. It appears to me, moreover, that even your own authors did not always consider this doctrine of yours so certain. Your Father Suarez, for instance, speaks of it thus: 'Although it is a

probable opinion that attrition is sufficient with the sacrament, yet it is not certain, and it may be false- non est certa, et potest esse falsa. And, if it is false, attrition is not sufficient to save a man; and he that dies knowingly in this state, wilfully exposes himself to the grave peril of eternal damnation. For this opinion is neither very ancient nor very common- nec valde antiqua, nec multum communis.' Sanchez was not more prepared to hold it as infallible when he said in his Summary that 'the sick man and his confessor, who content themselves at the hour of death with attrition and the sacrament, are both chargeable with mortal sin, on account of the great risk of damnation to which the penitent would be exposed, if the opinion that attrition is sufficient with the sacrament should not turn out to be true. Comitolus, too, says that 'we should not be too sure that attrition suffices with the sacrament.'"

Here the worthy father interrupted me. "What!" he cried, "you read our authors then, it seems? That is all very well; but it would be still better were you never to read them without the precaution of having one of us beside you. Do you not see, now, that, from having read them alone, you have concluded, in your simplicity, that these passages bear hard on those who have more lately supported our doctrine of attrition? Whereas it might be shown that nothing could set them off to greater advantage. Only think what a triumph it is for our fathers of the present day to have succeeded in disseminating their opinion in such short time, and to such an extent that, with the exception of theologians, nobody almost would ever suppose but that our modern views on this subject had been the uniform belief of the faithful in all ages! So that, in fact, when you have shown, from our fathers themselves, that, a few years ago, 'this opinion was not certain,' you have only succeeded in giving our modern authors the whole merit of its establishment!

"Accordingly," he continued, "our cordial friend Diana, to gratify us, no doubt, has recounted the various steps by which the opinion reached its present position. 'In former days, the ancient schoolmen maintained that contrition was necessary as soon as one had committed a mortal sin; since then, however, it has been thought that it is not binding except on festival days; afterwards, only when some

great calamity threatened the people; others, again, that it ought not to be long delayed at the approach of death. But our fathers, Hurtado and Vasquez, have ably refuted all these opinions and established that one is not bound to contrition unless he cannot be absolved in any other way, or at the point of death!' But, to continue the wonderful progress of this doctrine, I might add, what our fathers, Fagundez, Granados, and Escobar, have decided, 'that contrition is not necessary even at death; because,' say they, 'if attrition with the sacrament did not suffice at death, it would follow that attrition would not be sufficient with the sacrament. And the learned Hurtado, cited by Diana and Escobar, goes still further; for he asks: 'Is that sorrow for sin which flows solely from apprehension of its temporal consequences, such as having lost health or money, sufficient? We must distinguish. If the evil is not regarded as sent by the hand of God, such a sorrow does not suffice; but if the evil is viewed as sent by God, as, in fact, all evil, says Diana, except sin, comes from him, that kind of sorrow is sufficient.' Our Father Lamy holds the same doctrine."

"You surprise me, father; for I see nothing in all that attrition of which you speak but what is natural; and in this way a sinner may render himself worthy of absolution without supernatural grace at all. Now everybody knows that this is a heresy condemned by the Council."

"I should have thought with you," he replied; "and yet it seems this must not be the case, for the fathers of our College of Clermont have maintained (in their Theses of the 23rd May and 6th June 1644) 'that attrition may be holy and sufficient for the sacrament, although it may not be supernatural'; and (in that of August 1643) 'that attrition, though merely natural, is sufficient for the sacrament, provided it is honest.' I do not see what more could be said on the subject, unless we choose to subjoin an inference, which may be easily drawn from these principles, namely, that contrition, so far from being necessary to the sacrament, is rather prejudicial to it, inasmuch as, by washing away sins of itself, it would leave nothing for the sacrament to do at all. That is, indeed, exactly what the celebrated Jesuit Father Valencia remarks. (Book iv, disp.7, q.8, p.4.) 'Contrition,'

says he, 'is by no means necessary in order to obtain the principal benefit of the sacrament; on the contrary, it is rather an obstacle in the way of it- imo obstat potius quominus effectus sequatur.' Nobody could well desire more to be said in commendation of attrition."

"I believe that, father, said I; "but you must allow me to tell you my opinion, and to show you to what a dreadful length this doctrine leads. When you say that 'attrition, induced by the mere dread of punishment,' is sufficient, with the sacrament, to justify sinners, does it not follow that a person may always expiate his sins in this way, and thus be saved without ever having loved God all his lifetime? Would your fathers venture to hold that?"

"I perceive," replied the monk, "from the strain of your remarks, that you need some information on the doctrine of our fathers regarding the love of God. This is the last feature of their morality, and the most important of all. You must have learned something of it from the passages about contrition which I have quoted to you. But here are others still more definite on the point of love to God- Don't interrupt me, now; for it is of importance to notice the connection. Attend to Escobar, who reports the different opinions of our authors, in his Practice of the Love of God according to our Society. The question is: 'When is one obliged to have an actual affection for God?' Suarez says it is enough if one loves Him before being articulo mortis- at the point of death- without determining the exact time. Vasquez, that it is sufficient even at the very point of death. Others, when one has received baptism. Others, again, when one is bound to exercise contrition. And others, on festival days. But our father, Castro Palao, combats all these opinions, and with good reason- merito. Hurtado de Mendoza insists that we are obliged to love God once a year; and that we ought to regard it as a great favour that we are not bound to do it oftener. But our Father Coninck thinks that we are bound to it only once in three or four years; Henriquez, once in five years; and Filiutius says that it is probable that we are not strictly bound to it even once in five years. How often, then, do you ask? Why, he refers it to the judgement of the judicious."

I took no notice of all this badinage, in which the ingenuity of man seems to be sporting, in the height of insolence, with the love of God.

"But," pursued the monk, "our Father Antony Sirmond surpasses all on this point, in his admirable book, The Defence of Virtue, where, as he tells the reader, 'he speaks French in France,' as follows: 'St. Thomas says that we are obliged to love God as soon as we come to the use of reason: that is rather too soon! Scotus says every Sunday; pray, for what reason? Others say when we are sorely tempted: yes, if there be no other way of escaping the temptation. Scotus says when we have received a benefit from God: good, in the way of thanking Him for it. Others say at death: rather late! As little do I think it binding at the reception of any sacrament: attrition in such cases is quite enough, along with confession, if convenient. Suarez says that it is binding at some time or another; but at what time?- he leaves you to judge of that for yourself- he does not know; and what that doctor did not know I know not who should know.' In short, he concludes that we are not strictly bound to more than to keep the other commandments, without any affection for God, and without giving Him our hearts, provided that we do not hate Him. To prove this is the sole object of his second treatise. You will find it in every page; more especially where he says: 'God, in commanding us to love Him, is satisfied with our obeying Him in his other commandments. If God had said: "Whatever obedience thou yieldest me, if thy heart is not given to me, I will destroy thee!" would such a motive, think you, be well fitted to promote the end which God must, and only can, have in view? Hence it is said that we shall love God by doing His will, as if we loved Him with affection, as if the motive in this case was real charity. If that is really our motive, so much the better; if not, still we are strictly fulfilling the commandment of love, by having its works, so that (such is the goodness of God!) we are commanded, not so much to love Him, as not to hate Him.'

"Such is the way in which our doctors have discharged men from the painful obligation of actually loving God. And this doctrine is so advantageous that our Fathers Annat, Pintereau, Le Moine, and Antony Sirmond himself, have

strenuously defended it when it has been attacked. You have only to consult their answers to the Moral Theology. That of Father Pintereau, in particular, will enable you to form some idea of the value of this dispensation, from the price which he tells us that it cost, which is no less than the blood of Jesus Christ. This crowns the whole. It appears, that this dispensation from the painful obligation to love God, is the privilege of the Evangelical law, in opposition to the Judaical. 'It was reasonable,' he says, 'that, under the law of grace in the New Testament, God should relieve us from that troublesome and arduous obligation which existed under the law of bondage, to exercise an act of perfect contrition, in order to be justified; and that the place of this should be supplied by the sacraments, instituted in aid of an easier disposition. Otherwise, indeed, Christians, who are the children, would have no greater facility in gaining the good graces of their Father than the Jews, who were the slaves, had in obtaining the mercy of their Lord and Master.'"

"O father!" cried I; "no patience can stand this any longer. It is impossible to listen without horror to the sentiments I have just heard."

"They are not my sentiments," said the monk.

"I grant it, sir," said I; "but you feel no aversion to them; and, so far from detesting the authors of these maxims, you hold them in esteem. Are you not afraid that your consent may involve you in a participation of their guilt? and are you not aware that St. Paul judges worthy of death, not only the authors of evil things, but also 'those who have pleasure in them that do them?' Was it not enough to have permitted men to indulge in so many forbidden things under the covert of your palliations? Was it necessary to go still further and hold out a bribe to them to commit even those crimes which you found it impossible to excuse, by offering them an easy and certain absolution; and for this purpose nullifying the power of the priests, and obliging them, more as slaves than as judges, to absolve the most inveterate sinners- without any amendment of life, without any sign of contrition except promises a hundred times broken, without penance 'unless they

choose to accept of it', and without abandoning the occasions of their vices, 'if they should thereby be put to any inconvenience?'

"But your doctors have gone even beyond this; and the license which they have assumed to tamper with the most holy rules of Christian conduct amounts to a total subversion of the law of God. They violate 'the great commandment on which hang all the law and the prophets'; they strike at the very heart of piety; they rob it of the spirit that giveth life; they hold that to love God is not necessary to salvation; and go so far as to maintain that 'this dispensation from loving God is the privilege which Jesus Christ has introduced into the world!' This, sir, is the very climax of impiety. The price of the blood of Jesus Christ paid to obtain us a dispensation from loving Him! Before the incarnation, it seems men were obliged to love God; but since 'God has so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son,' the world, redeemed by him, is released from loving Him! Strange divinity of our days- to dare to take off the 'anathema' which St. Paul denounces on those 'that love not the Lord Jesus!' To cancel the sentence of St. John: 'He that loveth not, abideth in death!' and that of Jesus Christ himself: 'He that loveth me not keepeth not my precepts!' and thus to render those worthy of enjoying God through eternity who never loved God all their life! Behold the Mystery of Iniquity fulfilled! Open your eyes at length, my dear father, and if the other aberrations of your casuists have made no impression on you, let these last, by their very extravagance, compel you to abandon them. This is what I desire from the bottom of my heart, for your own sake and for the sake of your doctors; and my prayer to God is that He would vouchsafe to convince them how false the light must be that has guided them to such precipices; and that He would fill their hearts with that love of Himself from which they have dared to give man a dispensation!"

After some remarks of this nature, I took my leave of the monk, and I see no great likelihood of my repeating my visits to him. This, however, need not occasion you any regret; for, should it be necessary to continue these communications on their maxims, I have studied their books sufficiently to tell

you as much of their morality, and more, perhaps, of their policy, than he could have done himself. I am, &c.

LETTER XI. TO THE REVEREND FATHERS, THE JESUITS



August 18, 1656

REVEREND FATHERS,

I have seen the letters which you are circulating in opposition to those which I wrote to one of my friends on your morality; and I perceive that one of the principal points of your defence is that I have not spoken of your maxims with sufficient seriousness. This charge you repeat in all your productions, and carry it so far as to allege, that I have been "guilty of turning sacred things into ridicule."

Such a charge, fathers, is no less surprising than it is unfounded. Where do you find that I have turned sacred things into ridicule? You specify "the Mohatra contract, and the story of John d'Alba." But are these what you call "sacred things?" Does it really appear to you that the Mohatra is something so venerable that it would be blasphemy not to speak of it with respect? And the lessons of Father Bauny on larceny, which led John d'Alba to practise it at your expense, are they so sacred as to entitle you to stigmatize all who laugh at them as profane people?

What, fathers! must the vagaries of your doctors pass for the verities of the Christian faith, and no man be allowed to ridicule Escobar, or the fantastical and unchristian dogmas of your authors, without being stigmatized as jesting at religion? Is it possible you can have ventured to reiterate so often an idea so utterly unreasonable? Have you no fears that, in blaming me for laughing at your absurdities, you may only afford me fresh subject of merriment; that you may make the charge recoil on yourselves, by showing that I have really selected nothing from your writings as the matter of raillery but what was truly ridiculous; and that thus, in making a jest of your morality, I have been as far from jeering at

holy things, as the doctrine of your casuists is far from being the holy doctrine of the Gospel?

Indeed, reverend sirs, there is a vast difference between laughing at religion and laughing at those who profane it by their extravagant opinions. It were impiety to be wanting in respect for the verities which the Spirit of God has revealed; but it were no less impiety of another sort to be wanting in contempt for the falsities which the spirit of man opposes to them.

For, fathers (since you will force me into this argument), I beseech you to consider that, just in proportion as Christian truths are worthy of love and respect, the contrary errors must deserve hatred and contempt; there being two things in the truths of our religion: a divine beauty that renders them lovely, and a sacred majesty that renders them venerable; and two things also about errors: an impiety, that makes them horrible, and an impertinence that renders them ridiculous. For these reasons, while the saints have ever cherished towards the truth the twofold sentiment of love and fear- the whole of their wisdom being comprised between fear, which is its beginning, and love, which is its end- they have, at the same time, entertained towards error the twofold feeling of hatred and contempt, and their zeal has been at once employed to repel, by force of reasoning, the malice of the wicked, and to chastise, by the aid of ridicule, their extravagance and folly.

Do not then expect, fathers, to make people believe that it is unworthy of a Christian to treat error with derision. Nothing is easier than to convince all who were not aware of it before that this practice is perfectly just- that it is common with the fathers of the Church, and that it is sanctioned by Scripture, by the example of the best of saints, and even by that of God himself.

Do we not find God at once hates and despises sinners; so that even at the hour of death, when their condition is most sad and deplorable, Divine Wisdom adds mockery to the vengeance which consigns them to eternal punishment? “In interitu vestro ridebo et subsannabo- I will laugh at your calamity.” The saints, too, influenced by the same feeling, will join in the derision; for, according to David, when they witness the punishment of the wicked, “they shall fear, and yet

laugh at it- videbunt justi et timebunt, et super eum ridebunt." And Job says: "Innocens subsannabit eos- The innocent shall laugh at them."

It is worthy of remark here that the very first words which God addressed to man after his fall contain, in the opinion of the fathers, "bitter irony" and mockery. After Adam had disobeyed his Maker, in the hope, suggested by the devil, of being like God, it appears from Scripture that God, as a punishment, subjected him to death; and after having reduced him to this miserable condition, which was due to his sin, He taunted him in that state with the following terms of derision: "Behold, the man has become as one of us!- Ecce Adam quasi unus ex nobis!"- which, according to St. Jerome and the interpreters, is "a grievous and cutting piece of irony," with which God "stung him to the quick." "Adam," says Rupert, "deserved to be taunted in this manner, and he would be naturally made to feel his folly more acutely by this ironical expression than by a more serious one." St. Victor, after making the same remark, adds, "that this irony was due to his sottish credulity, and that this species of rainery is an act of justice, merited by him against whom it was directed."

Thus you see, fathers, that ridicule is, in some cases, a very appropriate means of reclaiming men from their errors, and that it is accordingly an act of justice, because, as Jeremiah says, "the actions of those that err are worthy of derision, because of their vanity- vana sunt es risu digna." And so far from its being impious to laugh at them, St. Augustine holds it to be the effect of divine wisdom: "The wise laugh at the foolish, because they are wise, not after their own wisdom, but after that divine wisdom which shall laugh at the death of the wicked."

The prophets, accordingly, filled with the Spirit of God, have availed themselves of ridicule, as we find from the examples of Daniel and Elias. In short, examples of it are not wanting in the discourses of Jesus Christ himself. St. Augustine remarks that, when he would humble Nicodemus, who deemed himself so expert in his knowledge of the law, "perceiving him to be pulled up with pride, from his rank as doctor of the Jews, he first beats down his presumption by the magnitude of his demands, and, having reduced him so low that he was unable to

answer, What! says he, you a master in Israel, and not know these things!- as if he had said, Proud ruler, confess that thou knowest nothing." St. Chrysostom and St. Cyril likewise observe upon this that "he deserved to be ridiculed in this manner."

You may learn from this, fathers, that should it so happen, in our day that persons who enact the part of "masters" among Christians, as Nicodemus and the Pharisees did among the Jews, show themselves so ignorant of the first principles of religion as to maintain, for example, that "a man may be saved who never loved God all his life," we only follow the example of Jesus Christ when we laugh at such a combination of ignorance and conceit.

I am sure, fathers, these sacred examples are sufficient to convince you that to deride the errors and extravagances of man is not inconsistent with the practice of the saints; otherwise we must blame that of the greatest doctors of the Church, who have been guilty of it- such as St. Jerome, in his letters and writings against Jovinian, Vigilantius, and the Pelagians; Tertullian, in his Apology against the follies of idolaters; St. Augustine against the monks of Africa, whom he styles "the hairy men"; St. Irenaeus the Gnostics; St. Bernard and the other fathers of the Church, who, having been the imitators of the apostles, ought to be imitated by the faithful in all time coming; for, say what we will, they are the true models for Christians, even of the present day.

In following such examples, I conceived that I could not go far wrong; and, as I think I have sufficiently established this position, I shall only add, in the admirable words of Tertullian, which give the true explanation of the whole of my proceeding in this matter: "What I have now done is only a little sport before the real combat. I have rather indicated the wounds that might be given you than inflicted any. If the reader has met with passages which have excited his risibility, he must ascribe this to the subjects themselves. There are many things which deserve to be held up in this way to ridicule and mockery, lest, by a serious refutation, we should attach a weight to them which they do not deserve. Nothing is more due to vanity than laughter; and it is the Truth properly that has a right to laugh, because she is cheerful, and to make sport of her enemies, because she is

sure of the victory. Care must be taken, indeed, that the raillery is not too low, and unworthy of the truth; but, keeping this in view, when ridicule may be employed with effect, it is a duty to avail ourselves of it." Do you not think fathers, that this passage is singularly applicable to our subject? The letters which I have hitherto written are "merely a little sport before a real combat." As yet, I have been only playing with the foils and "rather indicating the wounds that might be given you than inflicting any." I have merely exposed your passages to the light, without making scarcely a reflection on them. "If the reader has met with any that have excited his risibility, he must ascribe this to the subjects themselves." And, indeed, what is more fitted to raise a laugh than to see a matter so grave as that of Christian morality decked out with fancies so grotesque as those in which you have exhibited it? One is apt to form such high anticipations of these maxims, from being told that "Jesus Christ himself has revealed them to the fathers of the Society," that when one discovers among them such absurdities as "that a priest, receiving money to say a mass, may take additional sums from other persons by giving up to them his own share in the sacrifice"; "that a monk is not to be excommunicated for putting off his habit, provided it is to dance, swindle, or go incognito into infamous houses"; and "that the duty of hearing mass may be fulfilled by listening to four quarters of a mass at once from different priests"- when, I say, one listens to such decisions as these, the surprise is such that it is impossible to refrain from laughing; for nothing is more calculated to produce that emotion than a startling contrast between the thing looked for and the thing looked at. And why should the greater part of these maxims be treated in any other way? As Tertullian says, "To treat them seriously would be to sanction them."

What! is it necessary to bring up all the forces of Scripture and tradition, in order to prove that running a sword through a man's body, covertly and behind his back, is to murder him in treachery? or, that to give one money as a motive to resign a benefice, is to purchase the benefice? Yes, there are things which it is duty to despise, and which "deserve only to be laughed at." In short, the remark of

that ancient author, “that nothing is more due to vanity than derision, with what follows, applies to the case before us so justly and so convincingly, as to put it beyond all question that we may laugh at errors without violating propriety.

And let me add, fathers, that this may be done without any breach of charity either, though this is another of the charges you bring against me in your publications. For, according to St. Augustine, “charity may sometimes oblige us to ridicule the errors of men, that they may be induced to laugh at them in their turn, and renounce them- Haec tu misericorditer irride, ut eis ridenda ac fugienda commendes.” And the same charity may also, at other times, bind us to repel them with indignation, according to that other saying of St. Gregory of Nazianzen: “The spirit of meekness and charity hath its emotions and its heats.” Indeed, as St. Augustine observes, “who would venture to say that truth ought to stand disarmed against falsehood, or that the enemies of the faith shall be at liberty to frighten the faithful with hard words, and jeer at them with lively sallies of wit; while the Catholics ought never to write except with a coldness of style enough to set the reader asleep?”

Is it not obvious that, by following such a course, a wide door would be opened for the introduction of the most extravagant and pernicious dogmas into the Church; while none would be allowed to treat them with contempt, through fear of being charged with violating propriety, or to confute them with indignation, from the dread of being taxed with want of charity?

Indeed, fathers! shall you be allowed to maintain, “that it is lawful to kill a man to avoid a box on the ear or an affront,” and must nobody be permitted publicly to expose a public error of such consequence? Shall you be at liberty to say, “that a judge may in conscience retain a fee received for an act of injustice,” and shall no one be at liberty to contradict you? Shall you print, with the privilege and approbation of your doctors, “that a man may be saved without ever having loved God”; and will you shut the mouth of those who defend the true faith, by telling them that they would violate brotherly love by attacking you, and Christian modesty by laughing at your maxims? I doubt, fathers, if there be any persons

whom you could make believe this; if however, there be any such, who are really persuaded that, by denouncing your morality, I have been deficient in the charity which I owe to you, I would have them examine, with great jealousy, whence this feeling takes its rise within them. They may imagine that it proceeds from a holy zeal, which will not allow them to see their neighbour impeached without being scandalized at it; but I would entreat them to consider that it is not impossible that it may flow from another source, and that it is even extremely likely that it may spring from that secret, and often self-concealed dissatisfaction, which the unhappy corruption within us seldom fails to stir up against those who oppose the relaxation of morals. And, to furnish them with a rule which may enable them to ascertain the real principle from which it proceeds, I will ask them if, while they lament the way in which the religious have been treated, they lament still more the manner in which these religious have treated the truth; if they are incensed, not only against the letters, but still more against the maxims quoted in them. I shall grant it to be barely possible that their resentment proceeds from some zeal, though not of the most enlightened kind; and, in this case, the passages I have just cited from the fathers will serve to enlighten them. But if they are merely angry at the reprehension, and not at the things reprehended, truly, fathers, I shall never scruple to tell them that they are grossly mistaken, and that their zeal is miserably blind.

Strange zeal, indeed! which gets angry at those that censure public faults, and not at those that commit them! Novel charity this, which groans at seeing error confuted, but feels no grief at seeing morality subverted by that error. If these persons were in danger of being assassinated, pray, would they be offended at one advertising them of the stratagem that had been laid for them; and instead of turning out of their way to avoid it, would they trifle away their time in whining about the little charity manifested in discovering to them the criminal design of the assassins? Do they get waspish when one tells them not to eat such an article of food, because it is poisoned? or not to enter such a city, because it has the plague?

Whence comes it, then, that the same persons who set down a man as wanting in charity, for exposing maxims hurtful to religion, would, on the contrary, think him equally deficient in that grace were he not to disclose matters hurtful to health and life, unless it be from this, that their fondness for life induces them to take in good part every hint that contributes to its preservation, while their indifference to truth leads them, not only to take no share in its defence, but even to view with pain the efforts made for the extirpation of falsehood?

Let them seriously ponder, as in the sight of God, how shameful, and how prejudicial to the Church, is the morality which your casuists are in the habit of propagating; the scandalous and unmeasured license which they are introducing into public manners; the obstinate and violent hardihood with which you support them. And if they do not think it full time to rise against such disorders, their blindness is as much to be pitied as yours, fathers; and you and they have equal reason to dread that saying of St. Augustine, founded on the words of Jesus Christ, in the Gospel: “Woe to the blind leaders! woe to the blind followers!- Vae caecis ducentibus! vae caecis sequentibus!”

But, to leave you no room in future, either to create such impressions on the minds of others, or to harbour them in your own, I shall tell you, fathers (and I am ashamed I should have to teach you what I should have rather learnt from you), the marks which the fathers of the Church have given for judging when our animadversions flow from a principle of piety and charity, and when from a spirit of malice and impiety.

The first of these rules is that the spirit of piety always prompts us to speak with sincerity and truthfulness; whereas malice and envy make use of falsehood and calumny. “Splendentia et vehementia, sed rebus veris- Splendid and vehement in words, but true in things,” as St. Augustine says. The dealer in falsehood is an agent of the devil. No direction of the intention can sanctify slander; and though the conversion of the whole earth should depend on it, no man may warrantably calumniate the innocent: because none may do the least evil, in order to accomplish the greatest good; and, as the Scripture says, “the

truth of God stands in no need of our lie." St. Hilary observes that "it is the bounden duty of the advocates of truth, to advance nothing in its support but true things." Now, fathers, I can declare before God that there is nothing that I detest more than the slightest possible deviation from the truth, and that I have ever taken the greatest care, not only not to falsify (which would be horrible), but not to alter or wrest, in the slightest possible degree, the sense of a single passage. So closely have I adhered to this rule that, if I may presume to apply them to the present case, I may safely say, in the words of the same St. Hilary: "If we advance things that are false, let our statements be branded with infamy; but if we can show that they are public and notorious, it is no breach of apostolic modesty or liberty to expose them."

It is not enough, however, to tell nothing but the truth; we must not always tell everything that is true; we should publish only those things which it is useful to disclose, and not those which can only hurt, without doing any good. And, therefore, as the first rule is to speak with truth, the second is to speak with discretion. "The wicked," says St. Augustine, "in persecuting the good, blindly follow the dictates of their passion; but the good, in their prosecution of the wicked, are guided by a wise discretion, even as the surgeon warily considers where he is cutting, while the murderer cares not where he strikes." You must be sensible, fathers, that in selecting from the maxims of your authors, I have refrained from quoting those which would have galled you most, though I might have done it, and that without sinning against discretion, as others who were both learned and Catholic writers, have done before me. All who have read your authors know how far I have spared you in this respect. Besides, I have taken no notice whatever of what might be brought against individual characters among you; and I would have been extremely sorry to have said a word about secret and personal failings, whatever evidence I might have of them, being persuaded that this is the distinguishing property of malice, and a practice which ought never to be resorted to, unless where it is urgently demanded for the good of the Church. It is obvious, therefore, that, in what I have been compelled to advance against your

moral maxims, I have been by no means wanting in due consideration: and that you have more reason to congratulate yourself on my moderation than to complain of my indiscretion.

The third rule, fathers, is: That when there is need to employ a little raillery, the spirit of piety will take care to employ it against error only, and not against things holy; whereas the spirit of buffoonery, impiety, and heresy, mocks at all that is most sacred. I have already vindicated myself on that score; and indeed there is no great danger of falling into that vice so long as I confine my remarks to the opinions which I have quoted from your authors.

In short, fathers, to abridge these rules, I shall only mention another, which is the essence and the end of all the rest: That the spirit of charity prompts us to cherish in the heart a desire for the salvation of those against whom we dispute, and to address our prayers to God while we direct our accusations to men. "We ought ever," says St. Augustine, "to preserve charity in the heart, even while we are obliged to pursue a line of external conduct which to man has the appearance of harshness; we ought to smite them with a sharpness, severe but kindly, remembering that their advantage is more to be studied than their gratification." I am sure, fathers, that there is nothing in my letters from which it can be inferred that I have not cherished such a desire towards you; and as you can find nothing to the contrary in them, charity obliges you to believe that I have been really actuated by it. It appears, then, that you cannot prove that I have offended against this rule, or against any of the other rules which charity inculcates; and you have no right to say, therefore, that I have violated it.

But, fathers, if you should now like to have the pleasure of seeing, within a short compass, a course of conduct directly at variance with each of these rules, and bearing the genuine stamp of the spirit of buffoonery, envy, and hatred, I shall give you a few examples of it; and, that they may be of the sort best known and most familiar to you, I shall extract them from your own writings.

To begin, then, with the unworthy manner in which your authors speak of holy things, whether in their sportive and gallant effusions, or in their more serious

pieces, do you think that the parcel of ridiculous stories, which your father Binet has introduced into his Consolation to the Sick, are exactly suitable to his professed object, which is that of imparting Christian consolation to those whom God has chastened with affliction? Will you pretend to say that the profane, foppish style in which your Father Le Moine has talked of piety in his Devotion made Easy is more fitted to inspire respect than contempt for the picture that he draws of Christian virtues? What else does his whole book of Moral Pictures breathe, both in its prose and poetry, but a spirit full of vanity, and the follies of this world? Take, for example, that ode in his seventh book, entitled, "Eulogy on Bashfulness, showing that all beautiful things are red, or inclined to redden." Call you that a production worthy of a priest? The ode is intended to comfort a lady, called Delphina, who was sadly addicted to blushing. Each stanza is devoted to show that certain red things are the best of things, such as roses, pomegranates, the mouth, the tongue; and it is in the midst of this badinage, so disgraceful in a clergyman, that he has the effrontery to introduce those blessed spirits that minister before God, and of whom no Christian should speak without reverence:

"The cherubim- those glorious choirs-
  Composed of head and plumes,
Whom God with His own Spirit inspires,
  And with His eyes illumes.
These splendid faces, as they fly,
Are ever red and burning high,
With fire angelic or divine;
And while their mutual flames combine,
The waving of their wings supplies
A fan to cool their ecstasies!
But redness shines with better grace,
Delphina, on thy beauteous face,
Where modesty sits revelling-
Arrayed in purple, like a king," &c.

What think you of this, fathers? Does this preference of the blushes of Delphina to the ardour of those spirits, which is neither more nor less than the ardour of divine love, and this simile of the fan applied to their mysterious wings, strike you as being very Christian-like in the lips which consecrate the adorable body of Jesus Christ? I am quite aware that he speaks only in the character of a gallant and to raise a smile; but this is precisely what is called laughing at things holy. And is it not certain, that, were he to get full justice, he could not save himself from incurring a censure? although, to shield himself from this, he pleads an excuse which is hardly less censurable than the offence, “that the Sorbonne has no jurisdiction over Parnassus, and that the errors of that land are subject neither to censure nor the Inquisition”; as if one could act the blasphemer and profane fellow only in prose! There is another passage, however, in the preface, where even this excuse fails him, when he says, “that the water of the river, on whose banks he composes his verses, is so apt to make poets, that, though it were converted into holy water, it would not chase away the demon of poesy.” To match this, I may add the following flight of your Father Garasse, in his Summary of the Capital Truths in Religion, where, speaking of the sacred mystery of the incarnation, he mixes up blasphemy and heresy in this fashion: “The human personality was grafted, as it were, or set on horseback, upon the personality of the Word!” And omitting many others, I might mention another passage from the same author, who, speaking on the subject of the name of Jesus, ordinarily written thus,

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I.H.S.

observes that “some have taken away the cross from the top of it, leaving the characters barely thus, I.H.S.- which,” says he, “is a stripped Jesus!”

Such is the indecency with which you treat the truths of religion, in the face of the inviolable law which binds us always to speak of them with reverence. But you have sinned no less flagrantly against the rule which obliges us to speak of them with truth and discretion. What is more common in your writings than

calumny? Can those of Father Brisacier be called sincere? Does he speak with truth when he says that “the nuns of Port-Royal do not pray to the saints, and have no images in their church?” Are not these most outrageous falsehoods, when the contrary appears before the eyes of all Paris? And can he be said to speak with discretion when he stabs the fair reputation of these virgins, who lead a life so pure and austere, representing them as “impenitent, unsacramentalists, uncommunicants, foolish virgins, visionaries, Calagans, desperate creatures, and anything you please,” loading them with many other slanders, which have justly incurred the censure of the late Archbishop of Paris? Or when he calumniates priests of the most irreproachable morals, by asserting “that they practise novelties in confession, to entrap handsome innocent females, and that he would be horrified to tell the abominable crimes which they commit.” Is it not a piece of intolerable assurance to advance slanders so black and base, not merely without proof, but without the slightest shadow, or the most distant semblance of truth? I shall not enlarge on this topic, but defer it to a future occasion, for I have something more to say to you about it; but what I have now produced is enough to show that you have sinned at once against truth and discretion.

But it may be said, perhaps, that you have not offended against the last rule at least, which binds you to desire the salvation of those whom you denounce, and that none can charge you with this, except by unlocking the secrets of your breasts, which are only known to God. It is strange, fathers, but true, nevertheless, that we can convict you even of this offence; that while your hatred to your opponents has carried you so far as to wish their eternal perdition, your infatuation has driven you to discover the abominable wish that, so far from cherishing in secret desires for their salvation, you have offered up prayers in public for their damnation; and that, after having given utterance to that hideous vow in the city of Caen, to the scandal of the whole Church, you have since then ventured, in Paris, to vindicate, in your printed books, the diabolical transaction. After such gross offences against piety, first ridiculing and speaking lightly of things the most sacred; next falsely and scandalously calumniating priests and

virgins; and lastly, forming desires and prayers for their damnation, it would be difficult to add anything worse. I cannot conceive, fathers, how you can fail to be ashamed of yourselves, or how you could have thought for an instant of charging me with a want of charity, who have acted all along with so much truth and moderation, without reflecting on your own horrid violations of charity, manifested in those deplorable exhibitions, which make the charge recoil against yourselves.

In fine, fathers, to conclude with another charge which you bring against me, I see you complain that among the vast number of your maxims which I quote, there are some which have been objected to already, and that I "say over again, what others have said before me." To this I reply that it is just because you have not profited by what has been said before that I say it over again. Tell me now what fruit has appeared from all the castigations you have received in all the books written by learned doctors and even the whole University? What more have your Fathers Annat, Caussin, Pintereau, and Le Moine done, in the replies they have put forth, except loading with reproaches those who had given them salutary admonitions? Have you suppressed the books in which these nefarious maxims are taught? Have you restrained the authors of these maxims? Have you become more circumspect in regard to them? On the contrary, is it not the fact that since that time Escobar has been repeatedly reprinted in France and in the Low Countries, and that your fathers Cellot, Bagot, Bauny, Lamy, Le Moine, and others, persist in publishing daily the same maxims over again, or new ones as licentious as ever? Let us hear no more complaints, then, fathers, either because I have charged you with maxims which you have not disavowed, or because I have objected to some new ones against you, or because I have laughed equally at them all. You have only to sit down and look at them, to see at once your own confusion and my defence. Who can look without laughing at the decision of Bauny, respecting the person who employs another to set fire to his neighbour's barn; that of Cellot on restitution; the rule of Sanchez in favour of sorcerers; the plan of Hurtado for avoiding the sin of duelling by taking a walk through a field

and waiting for a man; the compliments of Bauny for escaping usury; the way of avoiding simony by a detour of the intention, and keeping clear of falsehood by speaking high and low; and such other opinions of your most grave and reverend doctors? Is there anything more necessary, fathers, for my vindication? And, as Tertullian says, “can anything be more justly due to the vanity and weakness of these opinions than laughter?” But, fathers, the corruption of manners, to which your maxims lead, deserves another sort of consideration; and it becomes us to ask, with the same ancient writer: “Whether ought we to laugh at their folly, or deplore their blindness?- Rideam vanitatem, an exprobrem caecitatem?” My humble opinion is that one may either laugh at them or weep over them, as one is in the humour. “Haec tolerabilius vel ridentur, vel flentur, “ as St. Augustine says. The Scripture tells us that “there is a time to laugh, and a time to weep”; and my hope is, fathers, that I may not find verified, in your case, these words in the Proverbs: “If a wise man contendeth with a foolish man, whether he rage or laugh, there is no rest.”

P.S.- On finishing this letter, there was put in my hands one of your publications, in which you accuse me of falsification, in the case of six of your maxims quoted by me, and also with being in correspondence with heretics. You will shortly receive, I trust, a suitable reply; after which, fathers, I rather think you will not feel very anxious to continue this species of warfare.

LETTER XII. TO THE REVEREND FATHERS, THE JESUITS



September 9, 1656

REVEREND FATHERS,

I was prepared to write you on the subject of the abuse with which you have for some time past been assailing me in your publications, in which you salute me with such epithets as “reprobate,” “buffoon,” “blockhead,” “merry- Andrew,” “impostor,” “slanderer,” “cheat,” “heretic,” “Calvinist in disguise,” “disciple of Du Moulin,” “possessed with a legion of devils,” and everything else you can think of. As I should be sorry to have all this believed of me, I was anxious to show the public why you treated me in this manner; and I had resolved to complain of your calumnies and falsifications, when I met with your Answers, in which you bring these same charges against myself. This will compel me to alter my plan; though it will not prevent me from prosecuting it in some sort, for I hope, while defending myself, to convict you of impostures more genuine than the imaginary ones which you have ascribed to me. Indeed, fathers, the suspicion of foul play is much more sure to rest on you than on me. It is not very likely, standing as I do, alone, without power or any human defence against such a large body, and having no support but truth and integrity, that I would expose myself to lose everything by laying myself open to be convicted of imposture. It is too easy to discover falsifications in matters of fact such as the present. In such a case there would have been no want of persons to accuse me, nor would justice have been denied them. With you, fathers, the case is very different; you may say as much as you please against me, while I may look in vain for any to complain to. With such a wide difference between our positions, though there had been no other consideration to restrain me, it became me to study no little caution. By treating me, however, as a common slanderer, you compel me to assume the

defensive, and you must be aware that this cannot be done without entering into a fresh exposition and even into a fuller disclosure of the points of your morality. In provoking this discussion, I fear you are not acting as good politicians. The war must be waged within your own camp and at your own expense; and, although you imagine that, by embroiling the questions with scholastic terms, the answers will be so tedious, thorny, and obscure, that people will lose all relish for the controversy, this may not, perhaps, turn out to be exactly the case; I shall use my best endeavours to tax your patience as little as possible with that sort of writing. Your maxims have something diverting about them, which keeps up the good humour of people to the last. At all events, remember that it is you that oblige me to enter upon this eclaircissement, and let us see which of us comes off best in self-defence.

The first of your Impostures, as you call them, is on the opinion of Vasquez upon alms-giving. To avoid all ambiguity, then, allow me to give a simple explanation of the matter in dispute. It is well known, fathers, that, according to the mind of the Church, there are two precepts touching alms: 1st, "To give out of our superfluity in the case of the ordinary necessities of the poor"; and 2nd, "To give even out of our necessaries, according to our circumstances, in cases of extreme necessity." Thus says Cajetan, after St. Thomas; so that, to get at the mind of Vasquez on this subject, we must consider the rules he lays down, both in regard to necessaries and superfluities.

With regard to superfluity, which is the most common source of relief to the poor, it is entirely set aside by that single maxim which I have quoted in my Letters: "That what the men of the world keep with the view of improving their own condition, and that of their relatives, is not properly superfluity; so that such a thing as superfluity is rarely to be met with among men of the world, not even excepting kings." It is very easy to see, fathers, that, according to this definition, none can have superfluity, provided they have ambition; and thus, so far as the greater part of the world is concerned, alms-giving is annihilated. But even though a man should happen to have superfluity, he would be under no obligation,

according to Vasquez, to give it away in the case of ordinary necessity; for he protests against those who would thus bind the rich. Here are his own words: “Corduba,” says he, “teaches that when we have a superfluity we are bound to give out of it in cases of ordinary necessity; but this does not please me- sed hoc non placet- for we have demonstrated the contrary against Cajetan and Navarre.” So, fathers, the obligation to this kind of alms is wholly set aside, according to the good pleasure of Vasquez.

With regard to necessaries, out of which we are bound to give in cases of extreme and urgent necessity, it must be obvious, from the conditions by which he has limited the obligation, the richest man in all Paris may not come within its reach one in a lifetime. I shall only refer to two of these. The first is: That “we must know that the poor man cannot be relieved from any other quarter- haec intelligo et caetera omnia, quando SCIO nullum alium opem laturum.” What say you to this, fathers? Is it likely to happen frequently in Paris, where there are so many charitable people, that I must know that there is not another soul but myself to relieve the poor wretch who begs an alms from me? And yet, according to Vasquez, if I have not ascertained that fact, I may send him away with nothing. The second condition is: That the poor man be reduced to such straits “that he is menaced with some fatal accident, or the ruin of his character”- none of them very common occurrences. But what marks still more the rarity of the cases in which one is bound to give charity, is his remark, in another passage, that the poor man must be so ill off, “that he may conscientiously rob the rich man!” This must surely be a very extraordinary case, unless he will insist that a man may be ordinarily allowed to commit robbery. And so, after having cancelled the obligation to give alms out of our superfluities, he obliges the rich to relieve the poor only in those cases when he would allow the poor to rifle the rich! Such is the doctrine of Vasquez, to whom you refer your readers for their edification!

I now come to your pretended Impostures. You begin by enlarging on the obligation to alms-giving which Vasquez imposes on ecclesiastics. But on this point I have said nothing; and I am prepared to take it up whenever you choose.

This, then, has nothing to do with the present question. As for laymen, who are the only persons with whom we have now to do, you are apparently anxious to have it understood that, in the passage which I quoted, Vasquez is giving not his own judgement, but that of Cajetan. But as nothing could be more false than this, and as you have not said it in so many terms, I am willing to believe, for the sake of your character, that you did not intend to say it.

You next loudly complain that, after quoting that maxim of Vasquez, "Such a thing as superfluity is rarely if ever to be met with among men of the world, not excepting kings," I have inferred from it, "that the rich are rarely, if ever, bound to give alms out of their superfluity." But what do you mean to say, fathers? If it be true that the rich have almost never superfluity, is it not obvious that they will almost never be bound to give alms out of their superfluity? I might have put it into the form of a syllogism for you, if Diana, who has such an esteem for Vasquez that he calls him "the phoenix of genius," had not drawn the same conclusion from the same premisses; for, after quoting the maxim of Vasquez, he concludes, "that, with regard to the question, whether the rich are obliged to give alms out of their superfluity, though the affirmation were true, it would seldom, or almost never, happen to be obligatory in practice." I have followed this language word for word. What, then, are we to make of this, fathers? When Diana quotes with approbation the sentiments of Vasquez, when he finds them probable, and "very convenient for rich people," as he says in the same place, he is no slanderer, no falsifier, and we hear no complaints of misrepresenting his author; whereas, when I cite the same sentiments of Vasquez, though without holding him up as a phoenix, I am a slanderer, a fabricator, a corrupter of his maxims. Truly, fathers, you have some reason to be apprehensive, lest your very different treatment of those who agree in their representation, and differ only in their estimate of your doctrine, discover the real secret of your hearts and provoke the conclusion that the main object you have in view is to maintain the credit and glory of your Company. It appears that, provided your accommodating theology is treated as judicious complaisance, you never disavow those that publish it, but laud them as

contributing to your design; but let it be held forth as pernicious laxity, and the same interest of your Society prompts you to disclaim the maxims which would injure you in public estimation. And thus you recognize or renounce them, not according to the truth, which never changes, but according to the shifting exigencies of the times, acting on that motto of one of the ancients, “Omnia pro tempore, nihil pro veritate- Anything for the times, nothing for the truth.” Beware of this, fathers; and that you may never have it in your power again to say that I drew from the principle of Vasquez a conclusion which he had disavowed, I beg to inform you that he has drawn it himself: “According to the opinion of Cajetan, and according to my own- et secundum nostram- (he says, chap. i., no. 27), one is hardly obliged to give alms at all when one is only obliged to give them out of one’s superfluity.” Confess then, fathers, on the testimony of Vasquez himself, that I have exactly copied his sentiment; and think how you could have the conscience to say that “the reader, on consulting the original, would see to his astonishment that he there teaches the very reverse!”

In fine, you insist, above all, that if Vasquez does not bind the rich to give alms out of their superfluity, he obliges them to atone for this by giving out of the necessaries of life. But you have forgotten to mention the list of conditions which he declares to be essential to constitute that obligation, which I have quoted, and which restrict it in such a way as almost entirely to annihilate it. In place of giving this honest statement of his doctrine, you tell us, in general terms, that he obliges the rich to give even what is necessary to their condition. This is proving too much, fathers; the rule of the Gospel does not go so far; and it would be an error, into which Vasquez is very far, indeed, from having fallen. To cover his laxity, you attribute to him an excess of severity which would be reprehensible; and thus you lose all credit as faithful reporters of his sentiments. But the truth is, Vasquez is quite free from any such suspicion; for he has maintained, as I have shown, that the rich are not bound, either in justice or in charity, to give of their superfluities, and still less of their necessaries, to relieve the ordinary wants of the poor; and

that they are not obliged to give of the necessaries, except in cases so rare that they almost never happen.

Having disposed of your objections against me on this head, it only remains to show the falsehood of your assertion that Vasquez is more severe than Cajetan. This will by very easily done. That cardinal teaches “that we are bound in justice to give alms out of our superfluity, even in the ordinary wants of the poor; because, according to the holy fathers, the rich are merely the dispensers of their superfluity, which they are to give to whom they please, among those who have need of it.” And accordingly, unlike Diana, who says of the maxims of Vasquez that they will be “very convenient and agreeable to the rich and their confessors,” the cardinal, who has no such consolation to afford them, declares that he has nothing to say to the rich but these words of Jesus Christ: “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into heaven”; and to their confessors: “If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.” So indispensable did he deem this obligation! This, too, is what the fathers and all the saints have laid down as a certain truth. “There are two cases,” says St. Thomas, “in which we are bound to give alms as a matter of justice- ex debito legali: one, when the poor are in danger; the other, when we possess superfluous property.” And again: “The three-tenths which the Jews were bound to eat with the poor, have been augmented under the new law; for Jesus Christ wills that we give to the poor, not the tenth only, but the whole of our superfluity.” And yet it does not seem good to Vasquez that we should be obliged to give even a fragment of our superfluity; such is his complaisance to the rich, such his hardness to the poor, such his opposition to those feelings of charity which teach us to relish the truth contained in the following words of St. Gregory, harsh as it may sound to the rich of this world: “When we give the poor what is necessary to them, we are not so much bestowing on them what is our property as rendering to them what is their own; and it may be said to be an act of justice rather than a work of mercy.”

It is thus that the saints recommend the rich to share with the poor the good things of this earth, if they would expect to possess with them the good things of

heaven. While you make it your business to foster in the breasts of men that ambition which leaves no superfluity to dispose of, and that avarice which refuses to part with it, the saints have laboured to induce the rich to give up their superfluity, and to convince them that they would have abundance of it, provided they measured it, not by the standard of covetousness, which knows no bounds to its cravings, but by that of piety, which is ingenious in retrenchments, so as to have wherewith to diffuse itself in the exercise of charity. "We will have a great deal of superfluity," says St. Augustine, "if we keep only what is necessary: but if we seek after vanities, we will never have enough. Seek, brethren, what is sufficient for the work of God"- that is, for nature- "and not for what is sufficient for your covetousness," which is the work of the devil: "and remember that the superfluities of the rich are the necessaries of the poor."

I would fondly trust, fathers, that what I have now said to you may serve, not only for my vindication- that were a small matter- but also to make you feel and detest what is corrupt in the maxims of your casuists, and thus unite us sincerely under the sacred rules of the Gospel, according to which we must all be judged.

As to the second point, which regards simony, before proceeding to answer the charges you have advanced against me, I shall begin by illustrating your doctrine on this subject. Finding yourselves placed in an awkward dilemma, between the canons of the Church, which impose dreadful penalties upon simoniacs, on the one hand, and the avarice of many who pursue this infamous traffic on the other, you have recourse to your ordinary method, which is to yield to men what they desire, and give the Almighty only words and shows. For what else does the simoniac want but money in return for his benefice? And yet this is what you exempt from the charge of simony. And as the name of simony must still remain standing, and a subject to which it may be ascribed, you have substituted, in the place of this, an imaginary idea, which never yet crossed the brain of a simoniac, and would not serve him much though it did- the idea, namely, that simony lies in estimating the money considered in itself as highly as the spiritual gift or office considered in itself. Who would ever take it into his head to compare things so

utterly disproportionate and heterogeneous? And yet, provided this metaphysical comparison be not drawn, any one may, according to your authors, give away a benefice, and receive money in return for it, without being guilty of simony.

Such is the way in which you sport with religion, in order to gratify the worst passions of men; and yet only see with what gravity your Father Valentia delivers his rhapsodies in the passage cited in my letters. He says: “One may give a spiritual for a temporal good in two ways- first, in the way of prizing the temporal more than the spiritual, and that would be simony; secondly, in the way of taking the temporal as the motive and end inducing one to give away the spiritual, but without prizing the temporal more than the spiritual, and then it is not simony. And the reason is that simony consists in receiving something temporal as the just price of what is spiritual. If, therefore, the temporal is sought- si petatur temporale- not as the price, but only as the motive determining us to part with the spiritual, it is by no means simony, even although the possession of the temporal may be principally intended and expected- minime erit simonia, etiamsi temporale principaliter intendatur et expectetur.” Your redoubtable Sanchez has been favoured with a similar revelation; Escobar quotes him thus: “If one give a spiritual for a temporal good, not as the price, but as a motive to induce the collator to give it, or as an acknowledgement if the benefice has been actually received, is that simony? Sanchez assures us that it is not.” In your Caen Theses of 1644 you say: “It is a probable opinion, taught by many Catholics, that it is not simony to exchange a temporal for a spiritual good, when the former is not given as a price.” And as to Tanner, here is his doctrine, exactly the same with that of Valentia; and I quote it again to show you how far wrong it is in you to complain of me for saying that it does not agree with that of St. Thomas, for he avows it himself in the very passage which I quoted in my letter: “There is properly and truly no simony,” says he, “unless when a temporal good is taken as the price of a spiritual; but when taken merely as the motive for giving the spiritual, or as an acknowledgement for having received it, this is not simony, at least in point of conscience.” And again: “The same thing may be said, although the temporal

should be regarded as the principal end, and even preferred to the spiritual; although St. Thomas and others appear to hold the reverse, inasmuch as they maintain it to be downright simony to exchange a spiritual for a temporal good, when the temporal is the end of the transaction."

Such, then, being your doctrine on simony, as taught by your best authors, who follow each other very closely in this point, it only remains now to reply to your charges of misrepresentation. You have taken no notice of Valentia's opinion, so that his doctrine stands as it was before. But you fix on that of Tanner, maintaining that he has merely decided it to be no simony by divine right; and you would have it to be believed that, in quoting the passage, I have suppressed these words, divine right. This, fathers, is a most unconscionable trick; for these words, divine right, never existed in that passage. You add that Tanner declares it to be simony according to positive right. But you are mistaken; he does not say that generally, but only of particular cases, or, as he expresses it, in casibus a jure expressis, by which he makes an exception to the general rule he had laid down in that passage, "that it is not simony in point of conscience," which must imply that it is not so in point of positive right, unless you would have Tanner made so impious as to maintain that simony, in point of positive right, is not simony in point of conscience. But it is easy to see your drift in mustering up such terms as "divine right, positive right, natural right, internal and external tribunal, expressed cases, outward presumption," and others equally little known; you mean to escape under this obscurity of language, and make us lose sight of your aberrations. But, fathers, you shall not escape by these vain artifices; for I shall put some questions to you so simple, that they will not admit of coming under your distinguo.

I ask you, then, without speaking of "positive rights," of "outward presumptions," or "external tribunals"- I ask if, according to your authors, a beneficiary would be simoniacal, were he to give a benefice worth four thousand livres of yearly rent, and to receive ten thousand francs ready money, not as the price of the benefice, but merely as a motive inducing him to give it? Answer me plainly, fathers: What must we make of such a case as this according to your

authors? Will not Tanner tell us decidedly that “this is not simony in point of conscience, seeing that the temporal good is not the price of the benefice, but only the motive inducing to dispose of it?” Will not Valentia, will not your own Theses of Caen, will not Sanchez and Escobar, agree in the same decision and give the same reason for it? Is anything more necessary to exculpate that beneficiary from simony? And, whatever might be your private opinion of the case, durst you deal with that man as a simonist in your confessionals, when he would be entitled to stop your mouth by telling you that he acted according to the advice of so many grave doctors? Confess candidly, then, that, according to your views, that man would be no simonist; and, having done so, defend the doctrine as you best can.

Such, fathers, is the true mode of treating questions, in order to unravel, instead of perplexing them, either by scholastic terms, or, as you have done in your last charge against me here, by altering the state of the question. Tanner, you say, has, at any rate, declared that such an exchange is a great sin; and you blame me for having maliciously suppressed this circumstance, which, you maintain, “completely justifies him.” But you are wrong again, and that in more ways than one. For, first, though what you say had been true, it would be nothing to the point, the question in the passage to which I referred being, not if it was sin, but if it was simony. Now, these are two very different questions. Sin, according to your maxims, obliges only to confession- simony obliges to restitution; and there are people to whom these may appear two very different things. You have found expedients for making confession a very easy affair; but you have not fallen upon ways and means to make restitution an agreeable one. Allow me to add that the case which Tanner charges with sin is not simply that in which a spiritual good is exchanged for a temporal, the latter being the principal end in view, but that in which the party “prizes the temporal above the spiritual,” which is the imaginary case already spoken of. And it must be allowed he could not go far wrong in charging such a case as that with sin, since that man must be either very wicked or very stupid who, when permitted to exchange the one thing for the other, would not avoid the sin of the transaction by such a simple process as that of abstaining

from comparing the two things together. Besides, Valentia, in the place quoted, when treating the question- if it be sinful to give a spiritual good for a temporal, the latter being the main consideration- and after producing the reasons given for the affirmative, adds, “Sed hoc non videtur mihi satis certum- But this does not appear to my mind sufficiently certain.”

Since that time, however, your father, Erade Bille, professor of cases of conscience at Caen, has decided that there is no sin at all in the case supposed; for probable opinions, you know, are always in the way of advancing to maturity. This opinion he maintains in his writings of 1644, against which M. Dupre, doctor and professor at Caen, delivered that excellent oration, since printed and well known. For though this Erade Bille confesses that Valentia’s doctrine, adopted by Father Milhard and condemned by the Sorbonne, “is contrary to the common opinion, suspected of simony, and punishable at law when discovered in practice,” he does not scruple to say that it is a probable opinion, and consequently sure in point of conscience, and that there is neither simony nor sin in it. “It is a probable opinion, he says, “taught by many Catholic doctors, that there is neither any simony nor any sin in giving money, or any other temporal thing, for a benefice, either in the way of acknowledgement, or as a motive, without which it would not be given, provided it is not given as a price equal to the benefice.” This is all that could possibly be desired. In fact, according to these maxims of yours, simony would be so exceedingly rare that we might exempt from this sin even Simon Magus himself, who desired to purchase the Holy Spirit and is the emblem of those simonists that buy spiritual things; and Gehazi, who took money for a miracle and may be regarded as the prototype of the simonists that sell them. There can be no doubt that when Simon, as we read in the Acts, “offered the apostles money, saying, Give me also this power”; he said nothing about buying or selling, or fixing the price; he did no more than offer the money as a motive to induce them to give him that spiritual gift; which being, according to you, no simony at all, he might, had be but been instructed in your maxims, have escaped the anathema of St. Peter. The same unhappy ignorance was a great

loss to Gehazi, when he was struck with leprosy by Elisha; for, as he accepted the money from the prince who had been miraculously cured, simply as an acknowledgement, and not as a price equivalent to the divine virtue which had effected the miracle, he might have insisted on the prophet healing him again on pain of mortal sin; seeing, on this supposition, he would have acted according to the advice of your grave doctors, who, in such cases, oblige confessors to absolve their penitents and to wash them from that spiritual leprosy of which the bodily disease is the type.

Seriously, fathers, it would be extremely easy to hold you up to ridicule in this matter, and I am at a loss to know why you expose yourselves to such treatment. To produce this effect, I have nothing more to do than simply to quote Escobar, in his Practice of Simony according to the Society of Jesus; "Is it simony when two Churchmen become mutually pledged thus: Give me your vote for my election as Provincial, and I shall give you mine for your election as prior? By no means." Or take another: "It is not simony to get possession of a benefice by promising a sum of money, when one has no intention of actually paying the money; for this is merely making a show of simony, and is as far from being real simony as counterfeit gold is from the genuine." By this quirk of conscience, he has contrived means, in the way of adding swindling to simony, for obtaining benefices without simony and without money.

But I have no time to dwell longer on the subject, for I must say a word or two in reply to your third accusation, which refers to the subject of bankrupts. Nothing can be more gross than the manner in which you have managed this charge. You rail at me as a libeller in reference to a sentiment of Lessius, which I did not quote myself, but took from a passage in Escobar; and, therefore, though it were true that Lessius does not hold the opinion ascribed to him by Escobar, what can be more unfair than to charge me with the misrepresentation? When I quote Lessius or others of your authors myself, I am quite prepared to answer for it; but, as Escobar has collected the opinions of twenty-four of your writers, I beg to ask if I am bound to guarantee anything beyond the correctness of my citations from his

book? Or if I must, in addition, answer for the fidelity of all his quotations of which I may avail myself? This would be hardly reasonable; and yet this is precisely the case in the question before us. I produced in my letter the following passage from Escobar, and you do not object to the fidelity of my translation: "May the bankrupt, with a good conscience, retain as much of his property as is necessary to afford him an honourable maintenance- ne indecore vivat? I answer, with Lessius, that he may- cum Lessio assero posse." You tell me that Lessius does not hold that opinion. But just consider for a moment the predicament in which you involve yourselves. If it turns out that he does hold that opinion, you will be set down as impostors for having asserted the contrary; and if it is proved that he does not hold it, Escobar will be the impostor; so it must now of necessity follow that one or other of the Society will be convicted of imposture. Only think what a scandal! You cannot, it would appear, foresee the consequences of things. You seem to imagine that you have nothing more to do than to cast aspersions upon people, without considering on whom they may recoil. Why did you not acquaint Escobar with your objection before venturing to publish it? He might have given you satisfaction. It is not so very troublesome to get word from Valladolid, where he is living in perfect health, and completing his grand work on Moral Theology, in six volumes, on the first of which I mean to say a few words by-and-by. They have sent him the first ten letters; you might as easily have sent him your objection, and I am sure he would have soon returned you an answer, for he has doubtless seen in Lessius the passage from which he took the ne indecore vivat. Read him yourselves, fathers, and you will find it word for word, as I have done. Here it is: "The same thing is apparent from the authorities cited, particularly in regard to that property which he acquires after his failure, out of which even the delinquent debtor may retain as much as is necessary for his honourable maintenance, according to his station of life- ut non indecore vivat. Do you ask if this rule applies to goods which he possessed at the time of his failure? Such seems to be the judgement of the doctors."

I shall not stop here to show how Lessius, to sanction his maxim, perverts the law that allows bankrupts nothing more than a mere livelihood, and that makes no provision for "honourable maintenance." It is enough to have vindicated Escobar from such an accusation- it is more, indeed, than what I was in duty bound to do. But you, fathers, have not done your duty. It still remains for you to answer the passage of Escobar, whose decisions, by the way, have this advantage, that, being entirely independent of the context and condensed in little articles, they are not liable to your distinctions. I quoted the whole of the passage, in which "bankrupts are permitted to keep their goods, though unjustly acquired, to provide an honourable maintenance for their families"- commenting on which in my letters, I exclaim: "Indeed, father! by what strange kind of charity would you have the ill-gotten property of a bankrupt appropriated to his own use, instead of that of his lawful creditors?" This is the question which must be answered; but it is one that involves you in a sad dilemma, and from which you in vain seek to escape by altering the state of the question, and quoting other passages from Lessius, which have no connection with the subject. I ask you, then: May this maxim of Escobar be followed by bankrupts with a safe conscience, or no? And take care what you say. If you answer, "No," what becomes of your doctor, and your doctrine of probability? If you say, "Yes," I delate you to the Parliament.

In this predicament I must now leave you, fathers; for my limits will not permit me to overtake your next accusation, which respects homicide. This will serve for my next letter, and the rest will follow.

In the meanwhile, I shall make no remarks on the advertisements which you have tagged to the end of each of your charges, filled as they are with scandalous falsehoods. I mean to answer all these in a separate letter, in which I hope to show the weight due to your calumnies. I am sorry, fathers, that you should have recourse to such desperate resources. The abusive terms which you heap on me will not clear up our disputes, nor will your manifold threats hinder me from defending myself You think you have power and impunity on your side; and I think I have truth and innocence on mine. It is a strange and tedious war when

violence attempts to vanquish truth. All the efforts of violence cannot weaken truth, and only serve to give it fresh vigour. All the lights of truth cannot arrest violence, and only serve to exasperate it. When force meets force, the weaker must succumb to the stronger; when argument is opposed to argument, the solid and the convincing triumphs over the empty and the false; but violence and verity can make no impression on each other. Let none suppose, however, that the two are, therefore, equal to each other; for there is this vast difference between them, that violence has only a certain course to run, limited by the appointment of Heaven, which overrules its effects to the glory of the truth which it assails; whereas verity endures forever and eventually triumphs over its enemies, being eternal and almighty as God himself.

LETTER XIII. TO THE REVEREND FATHERS OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS



September 30, 1656

REVEREND FATHERS,

I have just seen your last production, in which you have continued your list of Impostures up to the twentieth and intimate that you mean to conclude with this the first part of your accusations against me, and to proceed to the second, in which you are to adopt a new mode of defence, by showing that there are other casuists besides those of your Society who are as lax as yourselves. I now see the precise number of charges to which I have to reply; and as the fourth, to which we have now come, relates to homicide, it may be proper, in answering it, to include the 11th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, and 18th, which refer to the same subject.

In the present letter, therefore, my object shall be to vindicate the correctness of my quotations from the charges of falsity which you bring against me. But as you have ventured, in your pamphlets, to assert that "the sentiments of your authors on murder are agreeable to the decisions of popes and ecclesiastical laws," you will compel me, in my next letter, to confute a statement at once so unfounded and so injurious to the Church. It is of some importance to show that she is innocent of your corruptions, in order that heretics may be prevented from taking advantage of your aberrations, to draw conclusions tending to her dishonour. And thus, viewing on the one hand your pernicious maxims, and on the other the canons of the Church which have uniformly condemned them, people will see, at one glance, what they should shun and what they should follow.

Your fourth charge turns on a maxim relating to murder, which you say I have falsely ascribed to Lessius. It is as follows: "That if a man has received a buffet, he may immediately pursue his enemy, and even return the blow with the sword,

not to avenge himself, but to retrieve his honour." This, you say, is the opinion of the casuist Victoria. But this is nothing to the point. There is no inconsistency in saying that it is at once the opinion of Victoria and of Lessius; for Lessius himself says that it is also held by Navarre and Henriquez, who teach identically the same doctrine. The only question, then, is if Lessius holds this view as well as his brother casuists. You maintain "that Lessius quotes this opinion solely for the purpose of refuting it, and that I, therefore, attribute to him a sentiment which he produces only to overthrow- the basest and most disgraceful act of which a writer can be guilty." Now I maintain, fathers, that he quotes the opinion solely for the purpose of supporting it. Here is a question of fact, which it will be very easy to settle. Let us see, then, how you prove your allegation, and you will see afterwards how I prove mine.

To show that Lessius is not of that opinion, you tell us that he condemns the practice of it; and in proof of this, you quote one passage of his (l. 2, c. 9, n. 92), in which he says, in so many words, "I condemn the practice of it." I grant that, on looking for these words, at number 92, to which you refer, they will be found there. But what will people say, fathers, when they discover, at the same time, that he is treating in that place of a question totally different from that of which we are speaking, and that the opinion of which he there says that he condemns the practice has no connection with that now in dispute, but is quite distinct? And yet to be convinced that this is the fact, we have only to open the book to which you refer, and there we find the whole subject in its connection as follows: At number 79 he treats the question, "If it is lawful to kill for a buffet?" and at number 80 he finishes this matter without a single word of condemnation. Having disposed of this question, he opens a new one at 81, namely, "If it is lawful to kill for slanders?" and it is when speaking of this question that he employs the words you have quoted: "I condemn the practice of it."

Is it not shameful, fathers, that you should venture to produce these words to make it be believed that Lessius condemns the opinion that it is lawful to kill for a buffet? and that, on the ground of this single proof, you should chuckle over it, as

you have done, by saying: “Many persons of honour in Paris have already discovered this notorious falsehood by consulting Lessius, and have thus ascertained the degree of credit due to that slanderer?” Indeed! and is it thus that you abuse the confidence which those persons of honour repose in you? To show them that Lessius does not hold a certain opinion, you open the book to them at a place where he is condemning another opinion; and these persons, not having begun to mistrust your good faith and never thinking of examining whether the author speaks in that place of the subject in dispute, you impose on their credulity. I make no doubt, fathers, that, to shelter yourselves from the guilt of such a scandalous lie, you had recourse to your doctrine of equivocations; and that, having read the passage in a loud voice, you would say, in a lower key, that the author was speaking there of something else. But I am not so sure whether this saving clause, which is quite enough to satisfy your consciences, will be a very satisfactory answer to the just complaint of those “honourable persons,” when they shall discover that you have hoodwinked them in this style.

Take care, then, fathers, to prevent them by all means from seeing my letters; for this is the only method now left to you to preserve your credit for a short time longer. This is not the way in which I deal with your writings: I send them to all my friends; I wish everybody to see them. And I verily believe that both of us are in the right for our own interests; for, after having published with such parade this fourth Imposture, were it once discovered that you have made it up by foisting in one passage for another, you would be instantly denounced. It will be easily seen that if you could have found what you wanted in the passage where Lessius treated of this matter, you would not have searched for it elsewhere, and that you had recourse to such a trick only because you could find nothing in that passage favourable to your purpose.

You would have us believe that we may find in Lessius what you assert, “that he does not allow that this opinion (that a man may be lawfully killed for a buffet) is probable in theory”; whereas Lessius distinctly declares, at number 80: “This opinion, that a man may kill for a buffet, is probable in theory.” Is not this, word

for word, the reverse of your assertion? And can we sufficiently admire the hardihood with which you have advanced, in set phrase, the very reverse of a matter of fact! To your conclusion, from a fabricated passage, that Lessius was not of that opinion, we have only to place Lessius himself, who, in the genuine passage, declares that he is of that opinion.

Again, you would have Lessius to say "that he condemns the practice of it"; and, as I have just observed, there is not in the original a single word of condemnation; all that he says is: "It appears that it ought not to be easily permitted in practice- In praxi non videtur facile permittenda." Is that, fathers, the language of a man who condemns a maxim? Would you say that adultery and incest ought not to be easily permitted in practice? Must we not, on the contrary, conclude that as Lessius says no more than that the practice ought not to be easily permitted, his opinion is that it may be permitted sometimes, though rarely? And, as if he had been anxious to apprise everybody when it might be permitted, and to relieve those who have received affronts from being troubled with unreasonable scruples from not knowing on what occasions they might lawfully kill in practice, he has been at pains to inform them what they ought to avoid in order to practise the doctrine with a safe conscience. Mark his words: "It seems," says he, "that it ought not to be easily permitted, because of the danger that persons may act in this matter out of hatred or revenge, or with excess, or that this may occasion too many murders." From this it appears that murder is freely permitted by Lessius, if one avoids the inconveniences referred to- in other words, if one can act without hatred or revenge and in circumstances that may not open the door to a great many murders. To illustrate the matter, I may give you an example of recent occurrence- the case of the buffet of Compiegne. You will grant that the person who received the blow on that occasion has shown, by the way in which he has acted, that he was sufficiently master of the passions of hatred and revenge. It only remained for him, therefore, to see that he did not give occasion to too many murders; and you need hardly be told, fathers, it is such a rare spectacle to find Jesuits bestowing buffets on the officers of the royal household that he had no

great reason to fear that a murder committed on this occasion would be likely to draw many others in its train. You cannot, accordingly, deny that the Jesuit who figured on that occasion was killable with a safe conscience, and that the offended party might have converted him into a practical illustration of the doctrine of Lessius. And very likely, fathers, this might have been the result had he been educated in your school, and learnt from Escobar that the man who has received a buffet is held to be disgraced until he has taken the life of him who insulted him. But there is ground to believe that the very different instructions which he received from a curate, who is no great favourite of yours, have contributed not a little in this case to save the life of a Jesuit.

Tell us no more, then, of inconveniences which may, in many instances, be so easily got over, and in the absence of which, according to Lessius, murder is permissible even in practice. This is frankly avowed by your authors, as quoted by Escobar, in his Practice of Homicide, according to your Society. "Is it allowable," asks this casuist, "to kill him who has given me a buffet? Lessius says it is permissible in speculation, though not to be followed in practice- non consulendum in praxi- on account of the risk of hatred, or of murders prejudicial to the State. Others, however, have judged that, by avoiding these inconveniences, this is permissible and safe in practice- in praxi probabilem et tutam judicarunt Henriquez," &c. See how your opinions mount up, by little and little, to the climax of probabilism! The present one you have at last elevated to this position, by permitting murder without any distinction between speculation and practice, in the following terms: "It is lawful, when one has received a buffet, to return the blow immediately with the sword, not to avenge one's self, but to preserve one's honour." Such is the decision of your fathers of Caen in 1644, embodied in their publications produced by the university before parliament, when they presented their third remonstrance against your doctrine of homicide, as shown in the book then emitted by them, on page 339.

Mark, then, fathers, that your own authors have themselves demolished this absurd distinction between speculative and practical murder- a distinction which

the university treated with ridicule, and the invention of which is a secret of your policy, which it may now be worth while to explain. The knowledge of it, besides being necessary to the right understanding of your 15th, 16th, 17th, and 18th charges, is well calculated, in general, to open up, by little and little, the principles of that mysterious policy.

In attempting, as you have done, to decide cases of conscience in the most agreeable and accommodating manner, while you met with some questions in which religion alone was concerned- such as those of contrition, penance, love to God, and others only affecting the inner court of conscience- you encountered another class of cases in which civil society was interested as well as religion- such as those relating to usury, bankruptcy, homicide, and the like. And it is truly distressing to all that love the Church to observe that, in a vast number of instances, in which you had only Religion to contend with, you have violated her laws without reservation, without distinction, and without compunction; because you knew that it is not here that God visibly administers his justice. But in those cases in which the State is interested as well as Religion, your apprehension of man's justice has induced you to divide your decisions into two shares. To the first of these you give the name of speculation; under which category crimes, considered in themselves, without regard to society, but merely to the law of God, you have permitted, without the least scruple, and in the way of trampling on the divine law which condemns them. The second you rank under the denomination of practice, and here, considering the injury which may be done to society, and the presence of magistrates who look after the public peace, you take care, in order to keep yourselves on the safe side of the law, not to approve always in practice the murders and other crimes which you have sanctioned in speculation. Thus, for example, on the question, "If it be lawful to kill for slanders?" your authors, Filiutius, Reginald, and others, reply: "This is permitted in speculation- ex probabile opinione licet; but is not to be approved in practice, on account of the great number of murders which might ensue, and which might injure the State, if all slanderers were to be killed, and also because one might be punished in a court

of justice for having killed another for that matter." Such is the style in which your opinions begin to develop themselves, under the shelter of this distinction, in virtue of which, without doing any sensible injury to society, you only ruin religion. In acting thus, you consider yourselves quite safe. You suppose that, on the one hand, the influence you have in the Church will effectually shield from punishment your assaults on truth; and that, on the other, the precautions you have taken against too easily reducing your permissions to practice will save you on the part of the civil powers, who, not being judges in cases of conscience, are properly concerned only with the outward practice. Thus an opinion which would be condemned under the name of practice, comes out quite safe under the name of speculation. But this basis once established, it is not difficult to erect on it the rest of your maxims. There is an infinite distance between God's prohibition of murder and your speculative permission of the crime; but between that permission and the practice the distance is very small indeed. It only remains to show that what is allowable in speculation is also so in practice; and there can be no want of reasons for this. You have contrived to find them in far more difficult cases. Would you like to see, fathers, how this may be managed? I refer you to the reasoning of Escobar, who has distinctly decided the point in the first six volumes of his grand Moral Theology, of which I have already spoken- a work in which he shows quite another spirit from that which appears in his former compilation from your four-and-twenty elders. At that time he thought that there might be opinions probable in speculation, which might not be safe in practice; but he has now come to form an opposite judgment, and has, in this, his latest work, confirmed it. Such is the wonderful growth attained by the doctrine of probability in general, as well as by every probable opinion in particular, in the course of time. Attend, then, to what he says: "I cannot see how it can be that an action which seems allowable in speculation should not be so likewise in practice; because what may be done in practice depends on what is found to be lawful in speculation, and the things differ from each other only as cause and effect. Speculation is that which determines to action. Whence it follows that opinions probable in speculation may

be followed with a safe conscience in practice, and that even with more safety than those which have not been so well examined as matters of speculation."

Verily, fathers, your friend Escobar reasons uncommonly well sometimes; and, in point of fact, there is such a close connection between speculation and practice, that when the former has once taken root, you have no difficulty in permitting the latter, without any disguise. A good illustration of this we have in the permission "to kill for a buffet," which, from being a point of simple speculation, was boldly raised by Lessius into a practice "which ought not easily to be allowed"; from that promoted by Escobar to the character of "an easy practice"; and from thence elevated by your fathers of Caen, as we have seen, without any distinction between theory and practice, into a full permission. Thus you bring your opinions to their full growth very gradually. Were they presented all at once in their finished extravagance, they would beget horror; but this slow imperceptible progress gradually habituates men to the sight of them and hides their offensiveness. And in this way the permission to murder, in itself so odious both to Church and State, creeps first into the Church, and then from the Church into the State.

A similar success has attended the opinion of "killing for slander," which has now reached the climax of a permission without any distinction. I should not have stopped to quote my authorities on this point from your writings, had it not been necessary in order to put down the effrontery with which you have asserted, twice over, in your fifteenth Imposture, "that there never was a Jesuit who permitted killing for slander." Before making this statement, fathers, you should have taken care to prevent it from coming under my notice, seeing that it is so easy for me to answer it. For, not to mention that your fathers Reginald, Filiutius, and others, have permitted it in speculation, as I have already shown, and that the principle laid down by Escobar leads us safely on to the practice, I have to tell you that you have authors who have permitted it in so many words, and among others Father Hereau in his public lectures, on the conclusion of which the king put him under arrest in your house, for having taught, among other errors, that when a person

who has slandered us in the presence of men of honour, continues to do so after being warned to desist, it is allowable to kill him, not publicly, indeed, for fear of scandal, but in a private way- sed clam.

I have had occasion already to mention Father Lamy, and you do not need to be informed that his doctrine on this subject was censured in 1649 by the University of Louvain. And yet two months have not elapsed since your Father Des Bois maintained this very censured doctrine of Father Lamy and taught that "it was allowable for a monk to defend the honour which he acquired by his virtue, even by killing the person who assails his reputation- etiam cum morte invasoris"; which has raised such a scandal in that town that the whole of the cures united to impose silence on him, and to oblige him, by a canonical process, to retract his doctrine. The case is now pending in the Episcopal court.

What say you now, fathers? Why attempt, after that, to maintain that "no Jesuit ever held that it was lawful to kill for slander?" Is anything more necessary to convince you of this than the very opinions of your fathers which you quote, since they do not condemn murder in speculation, but only in practice, and that, too, "on account of the injury that might thereby accrue to the State"? And here I would just beg to ask whether the whole matter in dispute between us is not simply and solely to ascertain if you have or have not subverted the law of God which condemns murder? The point in question is, not whether you have injured the commonwealth, but whether you have injured religion. What purpose, then, can it serve, in a dispute of this kind, to show that you have spared the State, when you make it apparent, at the same time, that you have destroyed the faith? Is this not evident from your saying that the meaning of Reginald, on the question of killing for slanders, is, "that a private individual has a right to employ that mode of defence, viewing it simply in itself"? I desire nothing beyond this concession to confute you. "A private individual," you say, "has a right to employ that mode of defence" (that is, killing for slanders), "viewing the thing in itself"; and, consequently, fathers, the law of God, which forbids us to kill, is nullified by that decision.

It serves no purpose to add, as you have done, “that such a mode is unlawful and criminal, even according to the law of God, on account of the murders and disorders which would follow in society, because the law of God obliges us to have regard to the good of society.” This is to evade the question: for there are two laws to be observed- one forbidding us to kill, and another forbidding us to harm society. Reginald has not, perhaps, broken the law which forbids us to do harm to society; but he has most certainly violated that which forbids us to kill. Now this is the only point with which we have to do. I might have shown, besides, that your other writers, who have permitted these murders in practice, have subverted the one law as well as the other. But, to proceed, we have seen that you sometimes forbid doing harm to the State; and you allege that your design in that is to fulfil the law of God, which obliges us to consult the interests of society. That may be true, though it is far from being certain, as you might do the same thing purely from fear of the civil magistrate. With your permission, then, we shall scrutinize the real secret of this movement.

Is it not certain, fathers, that if you had really any regard to God, and if the observance of his law had been the prime and principal object in your thoughts, this respect would have invariably predominated in all your leading decisions and would have engaged you at all times on the side of religion? But, if it turns out, on the contrary, that you violate, in innumerable instances, the most sacred commands that God has laid upon men, and that, as in the instances before us, you annihilate the law of God, which forbids these actions as criminal in themselves, and that you only scruple to approve of them in practice, from bodily fear of the civil magistrate, do you not afford us ground to conclude that you have no respect to God in your apprehensions, and that if you yield an apparent obedience to his law, in so far as regards the obligation to do no harm to the State, this is not done out of any regard to the law itself, but to compass your own ends, as has ever been the way with politicians of no religion?

What, fathers! will you tell us that, looking simply to the law of God, which says, “Thou shalt not kill,” we have a right to kill for slanders? And after having

thus trampled on the eternal law of God, do you imagine that you atone for the scandal you have caused, and can persuade us of your reverence for Him, by adding that you prohibit the practice for State reasons and from dread of the civil arm? Is not this, on the contrary, to raise a fresh scandal? I mean not by the respect which you testify for the magistrate; that is not my charge against you, and it is ridiculous in you to banter, as you have done, on this matter. I blame you, not for fearing the magistrate, but for fearing none but the magistrate. And I blame you for this, because it is making God less the enemy of vice than man. Had you said that to kill for slander was allowable according to men, but not according to God, that might have been something more endurable; but when you maintain that what is too criminal to be tolerated among men may yet be innocent and right in the eyes of that Being who is righteousness itself, what is this but to declare before the whole world, by a subversion of principle as shocking in itself as it is alien to the spirit of the saints, that while you can be braggarts before God, you are cowards before men?

Had you really been anxious to condemn these homicides, you would have allowed the commandment of God which forbids them to remain intact; and had you dared at once to permit them, you would have permitted them openly, in spite of the laws of God and men. But, your object being to permit them imperceptibly, and to cheat the magistrate, who watches over the public safety, you have gone craftily to work. You separate your maxims into two portions. On the one side, you hold out “that it is lawful in speculation to kill a man for slander”; and nobody thinks of hindering you from taking a speculative view of matters. On the other side, you come out with this detached axiom, “that what is permitted in speculation is also permissible in practice”; and what concern does society seem to have in this general and metaphysical-looking proposition? And thus these two principles, so little suspected, being embraced in their separate form, the vigilance of the magistrate is eluded; while it is only necessary to combine the two together to draw from them the conclusion which you aim at- namely, that it is lawful in practice to put a man to death for a simple slander.

It is, indeed, fathers, one of the most subtle tricks of your policy to scatter through your publications the maxims which you club together in your decisions. It is partly in this way that you establish your doctrine of probabilities, which I have frequently had occasion to explain. That general principle once established, you advance propositions harmless enough when viewed apart, but which, when taken in connection with that pernicious dogma, become positively horrible. An example of this, which demands an answer, may be found in the 11th page of your Impostures, where you allege that "several famous theologians have decided that it is lawful to kill a man for a box on the ear." Now, it is certain that, if that had been said by a person who did not hold probabilism, there would be nothing to find fault with in it; it would in this case amount to no more than a harmless statement, and nothing could be elicited from it. But you, fathers, and all who hold that dangerous tenet, "that whatever has been approved by celebrated authors is probable and safe in conscience," when you add to this "that several celebrated authors are of opinion that it is lawful to kill a man for a box on the ear," what is this but to put a dagger into the hand of all Christians, for the purpose of plunging it into the heart of the first person that insults them, and to assure them that, having the judgement of so many grave authors on their side, they may do so with a perfectly safe conscience?

What monstrous species of language is this, which, in announcing that certain authors hold a detestable opinion, is at the same time giving a decision in favour of that opinion- which solemnly teaches whatever it simply tells! We have learnt, fathers, to understand this peculiar dialect of the Jesuitical school; and it is astonishing that you have the hardihood to speak it out so freely, for it betrays your sentiments somewhat too broadly. It convicts you of permitting murder for a buffet, as often as you repeat that many celebrated authors have maintained that opinion.

This charge, fathers, you will never be able to repel; nor will you be much helped out by those passages from Vasquez and Suarez that you adduce against me, in which they condemn the murders which their associates have approved.

These testimonies, disjoined from the rest of your doctrine, may hoodwink those who know little about it; but we, who know better, put your principles and maxims together. You say, then, that Vasquez condemns murders; but what say you on the other side of the question, my reverend fathers? Why, "that the probability of one sentiment does not hinder the probability of the opposite sentiment; and that it is warrantable to follow the less probable and less safe opinion, giving up the more probable and more safe one." What follows from all this taken in connection, but that we have perfect freedom of conscience to adopt any one of these conflicting judgements which pleases us best? And what becomes of all the effect which you fondly anticipate from your quotations? It evaporates in smoke, for we have no more to do than to conjoin for your condemnation the maxims which you have disjoined for your exculpation. Why, then, produce those passages of your authors which I have not quoted, to qualify those which I have quoted, as if the one could excuse the other? What right does that give you to call me an "impostor"? Have I said that all your fathers are implicated in the same corruptions? Have I not, on the contrary, been at pains to show that your interest lay in having them of all different minds, in order to suit all your purposes? Do you wish to kill your man?- here is Lessius for you. Are you inclined to spare him?- here is Vasquez. Nobody need go away in ill humour- nobody without the authority of a grave doctor. Lessius will talk to you like a Heathen on homicide, and like a Christian, it may be, on charity. Vasquez, again, will descant like a Heathen on charity, and like a Christian on homicide. But by means of probabilism, which is held both by Vasquez and Lessius, and which renders all your opinions common property, they will lend their opinions to one another, and each will be held bound to absolve those who have acted according to opinions which each of them has condemned. It is this very variety, then, that confounds you. Uniformity, even in evil, would be better than this. Nothing is more contrary to the orders of St. Ignatius and the first generals of your Society than this confused medley of all sorts of opinions, good and bad. I may, perhaps, enter on this topic at some future period; and it will astonish many to see how far

you have degenerated from the original spirit of your institution, and that your own generals have foreseen that the corruption of your doctrine on morals might prove fatal, not only to your Society, but to the Church universal.

Meanwhile, I repeat that you can derive no advantage from the doctrine of Vasquez. It would be strange, indeed, if, out of all the that have written on morals, one or two could not be found who may have hit upon a truth which has been confessed by all Christians. There is no glory in maintaining the truth, according to the Gospel, that it is unlawful to kill a man for smiting us on the face; but it is foul shame to deny it. So far, indeed, from justifying you, nothing tells more fatally against you than the fact that, having doctors among you who have told you the truth, you abide not in the truth, but love the darkness rather than the light. You have been taught by Vasquez that it is a Heathen, and not a Christian, opinion to hold that we may knock down a man for a blow on the cheek; and that it is subversive both of the Gospel and of the Decalogue to say that we may kill for such a matter. The most profligate of men will acknowledge as much. And yet you have allowed Lessius, Escobar, and others, to decide, in the face of these well-known truths, and in spite of all the laws of God against manslaughter, that it is quite allowable to kill a man for a buffet!

What purpose, then, can it serve to set this passage of Vasquez over against the sentiment of Lessius, unless you mean to show that, in the opinion of Vasquez, Lessius is a "Heathen" and a "profligate"? and that, fathers, is more than I durst have said myself. What else can be deduced from it than that Lessius "subverts both the Gospel and the Decalogue"; that, at the last day, Vasquez will condemn Lessius on this point, as Lessius will condemn Vasquez on another; and that all your fathers will rise up in judgement one against another, mutually condemning each other for their sad outrages on the law of Jesus Christ?

To this conclusion, then, reverend fathers, must we come at length, that, as your probabilism renders the good opinions of some of your authors useless to the Church, and useful only to your policy, they merely serve to betray, by their contrariety, the duplicity of your hearts. This you have completely unfolded, by

telling us, on the one hand, that Vasquez and Suarez are against homicide, and on the other hand, that many celebrated authors are for homicide; thus presenting two roads to our choice and destroying the simplicity of the Spirit of God, who denounces his anathema on the deceitful and the double-hearted: “Voe duplici corde, et ingredienti duabus viis!- Woe be to the double hearts, and the sinner that goeth two ways!”

LETTER XIV. TO THE REVEREND FATHERS, THE JESUITS



October 23, 1656

REVEREND FATHERS,

If I had merely to reply to the three remaining charges on the subject of homicide, there would be no need for a long discourse, and you will see them refuted presently in a few words; but as I think it of much more importance to inspire the public with a horror at your opinions on this subject than to justify the fidelity of my quotations, I shall be obliged to devote the greater part of this letter to the refutation of your maxims, to show you how far you have departed from the sentiments of the Church and even of nature itself. The permissions of murder, which you have granted in such a variety of cases, render it very apparent, that you have so far forgotten the law of God, and quenched the light of nature, as to require to be remanded to the simplest principles of religion and of common sense.

What can be a plainer dictate of nature than that "no private individual has a right to take away the life of another"? "So well are we taught this of ourselves," says St. Chrysostom, "that God, in giving the commandment not to kill, did not add as a reason that homicide was an evil; because," says that father, "the law supposes that nature has taught us that truth already." Accordingly, this commandment has been binding on men in all ages. The Gospel has confirmed the requirement of the law; and the Decalogue only renewed the command which man had received from God before the law, in the person of Noah, from whom all men are descended. On that renovation of the world, God said to the patriarch: "At the hand of man, and at the hand of every man's brother, will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for man is made in the image of God." (Gen. ix. 5, 6.) This general prohibition deprives man

of all power over the life of man. And so exclusively has the Almighty reserved this prerogative in His own hand that, in accordance with Christianity, which is at utter variance with the false maxims of Paganism, man has no power even over his own life. But, as it has seemed good to His providence to take human society under His protection, and to punish the evil-doers that give it disturbance, He has Himself established laws for depriving criminals of life; and thus those executions which, without this sanction, would be punishable outrages, become, by virtue of His authority, which is the rule of justice, praiseworthy penalties. St. Augustine takes an admirable view of this subject. "God," he says, "has himself qualified this general prohibition against manslaughter, both by the laws which He has instituted for the capital punishment of malefactors, and by the special orders which He has sometimes issued to put to death certain individuals. And when death is inflicted in such cases, it is not man that kills, but God, of whom man may be considered as only the instrument, in the same way as a sword in the hand of him that wields it. But, these instances excepted, whosoever kills incurs the guilt of murder."

It appears, then, fathers, that the right of taking away the life of man is the sole prerogative of God, and that, having ordained laws for executing death on criminals, He has deputed kings or commonwealths as the depositaries of that power- a truth which St. Paul teaches us, when, speaking of the right which sovereigns possess over the lives of their subjects, he deduces it from Heaven in these words: "He beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." (Rom. 13. 4.) But as it is God who has put this power into their hands, so He requires them to exercise it in the same manner as He does himself; in other words, with perfect justice; according to what St. Paul observes in the same passage: "Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou, then, not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good: for he is the minister of God to thee for good." And this restriction, so far from lowering their prerogative, exalts it, on the contrary, more than ever; for it is thus assimilated to that of God who has no power to do evil, but is all-powerful to

do good; and it is thus distinguished from that of devils, who are impotent in that which is good, and powerful only for evil. There is this difference only to be observed betwixt the King of Heaven and earthly sovereigns, that God, being justice and wisdom itself, may inflict death instantaneously on whomsoever and in whatsoever manner He pleases; for, besides His being the sovereign Lord of human life, it certain that He never takes it away either without cause or without judgement, because He is as incapable of injustice as He is of error. Earthly potentates, however, are not at liberty to act in this manner; for, though the ministers of God, still they are but men, and not gods. They may be misguided by evil counsels, irritated by false suspicions, transported by passion, and hence they find themselves obliged to have recourse, in their turn also, to human agency, and appoint magistrates in their dominions, to whom they delegate their power, that the authority which God has bestowed on them may be employed solely for the purpose for which they received it.

I hope you understand, then, fathers, that, to avoid the crime of murder, we must act at once by the authority of God, and according to the justice of God; and that, when these two conditions are not united, sin is contracted; whether it be by taking away life with his authority, but without his justice; or by taking it away with justice, but without his authority. From this indispensable connection it follows, according to St. Augustine, “that he who, without proper authority, kills a criminal, becomes a criminal himself, chiefly for this reason, that he usurps an authority which God has not given him”; and on the other hand, magistrates, though they possess this authority, are nevertheless chargeable with murder, if, contrary to the laws which they are bound to follow, they inflict death on an innocent man.

Such are the principles of public safety and tranquillity which have been admitted at all times and in all places, and on the basis of which all legislators, sacred and profane, from the beginning of the world, have founded their laws. Even Heathens have never ventured to make an exception to this rule, unless in cases where there was no other way of escaping the loss of chastity or life, when

they conceived, as Cicero tells us, “that the law itself seemed to put its weapons into the hands of those who were placed in such an emergency.”

But with this single exception, which has nothing to do with my present purpose, that such a law was ever enacted, authorizing or tolerating, as you have done, the practice of putting a man to death, to atone for an insult, or to avoid the loss of honour or property, where life is not in danger at the same time; that, fathers, is what I deny was ever done, even by infidels. They have, on the contrary, most expressly forbidden the practice. The law of the Twelve Tables of Rome bore, “that it is unlawful to kill a robber in the daytime, when he does not defend himself with arms”; which, indeed, had been prohibited long before in the 22d chapter of Exodus. And the law Furem, in the Lex Cornelia, which is borrowed from Ulpian, forbids the killing of robbers even by night, if they do not put us in danger of our lives.

Tell us now, fathers, what authority you have to permit what all laws, human as well as divine, have forbidden; and who gave Lessius a right to use the following language? “The book of Exodus forbids the killing of thieves by day, when they do not employ arms in their defence; and in a court of justice, punishment is inflicted on those who kill under these circumstances. In conscience, however, no blame can be attached to this practice, when a person is not sure of being able otherwise to recover his stolen goods, or entertains a doubt on the subject, as Sotus expresses it; for he is not obliged to run the risk of losing any part of his property merely to save the life of a robber. The same privilege extends even to clergymen.” Such extraordinary assurance! The law of Moses punishes those who kill a thief when he does not threaten our lives, and the law of the Gospel, according to you, will absolve them! What, fathers! has Jesus Christ come to destroy the law, and not to fulfil it? “The civil judge,” says Lessius, “would inflict punishment on those who should kill under such circumstances; but no blame can be attached to the deed in conscience.” Must we conclude, then, that the morality of Jesus Christ is more sanguinary, and less the enemy of murder, than that of Pagans, from whom our judges have borrowed their civil laws which condemn

that crime? Do Christians make more account of the good things of this earth, and less account of human life, than infidels and idolaters? On what principle do you proceed, fathers? Assuredly not upon any law that ever was enacted either by God or man- on nothing, indeed, but this extraordinary reasoning: “The laws,” say you, “permit us to defend ourselves against robbers, and to repel force by force; self-defence, therefore, being permitted, it follows that murder, without which self-defence is often impracticable, may be considered as permitted also.”

It is false, fathers, that, because self-defence is allowed, murder may be allowed also. This barbarous method of self-vindication lies at the root of all your errors, and has been justly stigmatized by the Faculty of Louvain, in their censure of the doctrine of your friend Father Lamy, as “a murderous defence- defensio occisiva.” I maintain that the laws recognize such a wide difference between murder and self-defence that, in those very cases in which the latter is sanctioned, they have made a provision against murder, when the person is in no danger of his life. Read the words, fathers, as they run in the same passage of Cujas: “It is lawful to repulse the person who comes to invade our property; but we are not permitted to kill him.” And again: “If any should threaten to strike us, and not to deprive us of life, it is quite allowable to repulse him; but it is against all law to put him to death.”

Who, then, has given you a right to say, as Molina, Reginald, Filiutius, Escobar, Lessius, and others among you, have said, “that it is lawful to kill the man who offers to strike us a blow”? or, “that it is lawful to take the life of one who means to insult us, by the common consent of all the casuists,” as Lessius says. By what authority do you, who are mere private individuals, confer upon other private individuals, not excepting clergymen, this right of killing and slaying? And how dare you usurp the power of life and death, which belongs essentially to none but God, and which is the most glorious mark of sovereign authority? These are the points that demand explanation; and yet you conceive that you have furnished a triumphant reply to the whole, by simply remarking, in your thirteenth Imposture, “that the value for which Molina permits us to kill a

thief, who flies without having done us any violence, is not so small as I have said, and that it must be a much larger sum than six ducats!" How extremely silly! Pray, fathers, where would you have the price to be fixed? At fifteen or sixteen ducats? Do not suppose that this will produce any abatement in my accusations. At all events, you cannot make it exceed the value of a horse; for Lessius is clearly of opinion, "that we may lawfully kill the thief that runs off with our horse." But I must tell you, moreover, that I was perfectly correct when I said that Molina estimates the value of the thief's life at six ducats; and, if you will not take it upon my word, we shall refer it to an umpire to whom you cannot object. The person whom I fix upon for this office is your own Father Reginald, who, in his explanation of the same passage of Molina (l.28, n. 68), declares that "Molina there determines the sum for which it is not allowable to kill at three, or four, or five ducats." And thus, fathers, I shall have Reginald, in addition to Molina, to bear me out.

It will be equally easy for me to refute your fourteenth Imposture, touching Molina's permission to "kill a thief who offers to rob us of a crown." This palpable fact is attested by Escobar, who tells us "that Molina has regularly determined the sum for which it is lawful to take away life, at one crown." And all you have to lay to my charge in the fourteenth Imposture is, that I have suppressed the last words of this passage, namely, "that in this matter every one ought to study the moderation of a just self-defence." Why do you not complain that Escobar has also omitted to mention these words? But how little tact you have about you! You imagine that nobody understands what you mean by self-defence. Don't we know that it is to employ "a murderous defence"? You would persuade us that Molina meant to say that if a person, in defending his crown, finds himself in danger of his life, he is then at liberty to kill his assailant, in self-preservation. If that were true, fathers, why should Molina say in the same place that "in this matter he was of a contrary judgement from Carrer and Bald," who give permission to kill in self-preservation? I repeat, therefore, that his plain meaning is that, provided the person can save his crown without killing the thief,

he ought not to kill him; but that, if he cannot secure his object without shedding blood, even though he should run no risk of his own life, as in the case of the robber being unarmed, he is permitted to take up arms and kill the man, in order to save his crown; and in so doing, according to him, the person does not transgress “the moderation of a just defence.” To show you that I am in the right, just allow him to explain himself: “One does not exceed the moderation of a just defence,” says he, “when he takes up arms against a thief who has none, or employs weapons which give him the advantage over his assailant. I know there are some who are of a contrary judgement; but I do not approve of their opinion, even in the external tribunal.”

Thus, fathers, it is unquestionable that your authors have given permission to kill in defence of property and honour, though life should be perfectly free from danger. And it is upon the same principle that they authorize duelling, as I have shown by a great variety of passages from their writings, to which you have made no reply. You have animadverted in your writings only on a single passage taken from Father Layman, who sanctions the above practice, “when otherwise a person would be in danger of sacrificing his fortune or his honour”; and here you accuse me with having suppressed what he adds, “that such a case happens very rarely.” You astonish me, fathers: these are really curious impostures you charge me withal. You talk as if the question were whether that is a rare case? when the real question is if, in such a case, duelling is lawful? These are two very different questions. Layman, in the quality of a casuist, ought to judge whether duelling is lawful in the case supposed; and he declares that it is. We can judge without his assistance whether the case be a rare one; and we can tell him that it is a very ordinary one. Or, if you prefer the testimony of your good friend Diana, he will tell you that “the case is exceedingly common.” But, be it rare or not, and let it be granted that Layman follows in this the example of Navarre, a circumstance on which you lay so much stress, is it not shameful that he should consent to such an opinion as that, to preserve a false honour, it is lawful in conscience to accept of a challenge, in the face of the edicts of all Christian states, and of all the canons of

the Church, while in support of these diabolical maxims you can produce neither laws, nor canons, nor authorities from Scripture, or from the fathers, nor the example of a single saint, nor, in short, anything but the following impious synogism: “Honour is more than life; it is allowable to kill in defence of life; therefore it is allowable to kill in defence of honour!” What, fathers! because the depravity of men disposes them to prefer that factitious honour before the life which God hath given them to be devoted to his service, must they be permitted to murder one another for its preservation? To love that honour more than life is in itself a heinous evil; and yet this vicious passion, which, when proposed as the end of our conduct, is enough to tarnish the holiest of actions, is considered by you capable of sanctifying the most criminal of them!

What a subversion of all principle is here, fathers! And who does not see to what atrocious excesses it may lead? It is obvious, indeed, that it will ultimately lead to the commission of murder for the most trifling things imaginable, when one’s honour is considered to be staked for their preservation- murder, I venture to say, even for an apple! You might complain of me, fathers, for drawing sanguinary inferences from your doctrine with a malicious intent, were I not fortunately supported by the authority of the grave Lessius, who makes the following observation, in number 68: “It is not allowable to take life for an article of small value, such as for a crown or for an apple- aut pro pomo- unless it would be deemed dishonourable to lose it. In this case, one may recover the article, and even, if necessary, kill the aggressor, for this is not so much defending one’s property as retrieving one’s honour.” This is plain speaking, fathers; and, just to crown your doctrine with a maxim which includes all the rest, allow me to quote the following from Father Hereau, who has taken it from Lessius: “The right of self-defence extends to whatever is necessary to protect ourselves from all injury.”

What strange consequences does this inhuman principle involve! and how imperative is the obligation laid upon all, and especially upon those in public stations, to set their face against it! Not the general good alone, but their own

personal interest should engage them to see well to it; for the casuists of your school whom I have cited in my letters extend their permissions to kill far enough to reach even them. Factious men, who dread the punishment of their outrages, which never appear to them in a criminal light, easily persuade themselves that they are the victims of violent oppression, and will be led to believe at the same time, “that the right of self-defence extends to whatever is necessary to protect themselves from all injury.” And thus, relieved from contending against the checks of conscience, which stifle the greater number of crimes at their birth, their only anxiety will be to surmount external obstacles.

I shall say no more on this subject, fathers; nor shall I dwell on the other murders, still more odious and important to governments, which you sanction, and of which Lessius, in common with many others of your authors, treats in the most unreserved manner. It was to be wished that these horrible maxims had never found their way out of hell; and that the devil, who is their original author, had never discovered men sufficiently devoted to his will to publish them among Christians.

From all that I have hitherto said, it is easy to judge what a contrariety there is betwixt the licentiousness of your opinions and the severity of civil laws, not even excepting those of Heathens. How much more apparent must the contrast be with ecclesiastical laws, which must be incomparably more holy than any other, since it is the Church alone that knows and possesses the true holiness! Accordingly, this chaste spouse of the Son of God, who, in imitation of her heavenly husband, can shed her own blood for others, but never the blood of others for herself, entertains a horror at the crime of murder altogether singular, and proportioned to the peculiar illumination which God has vouchsafed to bestow upon her. She views man, not simply as man, but as the image of the God whom she adores. She feels for every one of the race a holy respect, which imparts to him, in her eyes, a venerable character, as redeemed by an infinite price, to be made the temple of the living God. And therefore she considers the death of a man, slain without the authority of his Maker, not as murder only, but as sacrilege, by which she is

deprived of one of her members; for, whether he be a believer or an unbeliever, she uniformly looks upon him, if not as one, at least as capable of becoming one, of her own children.

Such, fathers, are the holy reasons which, ever since the time that God became man for the redemption of men, have rendered their condition an object of such consequence to the Church that she uniformly punishes the crime of homicide, not only as destructive to them, but as one of the grossest outrages that can possibly be perpetrated against God. In proof of this I shall quote some examples, not from the idea that all the severities to which I refer ought to be kept up (for I am aware that the Church may alter the arrangement of such exterior discipline), but to demonstrate her immutable spirit upon this subject. The penances which she ordains for murder may differ according to the diversity of the times, but no change of time can ever effect an alteration of the horror with which she regards the crime itself.

For a long time the Church refused to be reconciled, till the very hour of death, to those who had been guilty of wilful murder, as those are to whom you give your sanction. The celebrated Council of Ancyra adjudged them to penance during their whole lifetime; and, subsequently, the Church deemed it an act of sufficient indulgence to reduce that term to a great many years. But, still more effectually to deter Christians from wilful murder, she has visited with most severe punishment even those acts which have been committed through inadvertence, as may be seen in St. Basil, in St. Gregory of Nyssen, and in the decretals of Popes Zachary and Alexander II. The canons quoted by Isaac, bishop of Langres (tr. 2. 13), “ordain seven years of penance for having killed another in self-defence.” And we find St. Hildebert, bishop of Mans, replying to Yves de Chartres, “that he was right in interdicting for life a priest who had, in self-defence, killed a robber with a stone.”

After this, you cannot have the assurance to persist in saying that your decisions are agreeable to the spirit or the canons of the Church. I defy you to show one of them that permits us to kill solely in defence of our property (for I

speak not of cases in which one may be called upon to defend his life- se suaquae liberando); your own authors, and, among the rest, Father Lamy, confess that no such canon can be found. “There is no authority,” he says, “human or divine, which gives an express permission to kill a robber who makes no resistance.” And yet this is what you permit most expressly. I defy you to show one of them that permits us to kill in vindication of honour, for a buffet, for an affront, or for a slander. I defy you to show one of them that permits the killing of witnesses, judges, or magistrates, whatever injustice we may apprehend from them. The spirit of the church is diametrically opposite to these seditious maxims, opening the door to insurrections to which the mob is naturally prone enough already. She has invariably taught her children that they ought not to render evil for evil; that they ought to give place unto wrath; to make no resistance to violence; to give unto every one his due- honour, tribute, submission; to obey magistrates and superiors, even though they should be unjust, because we ought always to respect in them the power of that God who has placed them over us. She forbids them, still more strongly than is done by the civil law, to take justice into their own hands; and it is in her spirit that Christian kings decline doing so in cases of high treason, and remit the criminals charged with this grave offence into the hands of the judges, that they may be punished according to the laws and the forms of justice, which in this matter exhibit a contrast to your mode of management so striking and complete that it may well make you blush for shame.

As my discourse has taken this turn, I beg you to follow the comparison which I shall now draw between the style in which you would dispose of your enemies, and that in which the judges of the land dispose of criminals. Everybody knows, fathers, that no private individual has a right to demand the death of another individual; and that though a man should have ruined us, maimed our body, burnt our house, murdered our father, and was prepared, moreover, to assassinate ourselves, or ruin our character, our private demand for the death of that person would not be listened to in a court of justice. Public officers have been appointed for that purpose, who make the demand in the name of the king, or rather, I would

say, in the name of God. Now, do you conceive, fathers, that Christian legislators have established this regulation out of mere show and grimace? Is it not evident that their object was to harmonize the laws of the state with those of the Church, and thus prevent the external practice of justice from clashing with the sentiments which all Christians are bound to cherish in their hearts? It is easy to see how this, which forms the commencement of a civil process, must stagger you; its subsequent procedure absolutely overwhelms you.

Suppose then, fathers, that these official persons have demanded the death of the man who has committed all the above-mentioned crimes, what is to be done next? Will they instantly plunge a dagger in his breast? No, fathers; the life of man is too important to be thus disposed of; they go to work with more decency; the laws have committed it, not to all sorts of persons, but exclusively to the judges, whose probity and competency have been duly tried. And is one judge sufficient to condemn a man to death? No; it requires seven at the very least; and of these seven there must not be one who has been injured by the criminal, lest his judgement should be warped or corrupted by passion. You are aware also, fathers, that, the more effectually to secure the purity of their minds, they devote the hours of the morning to these functions. Such is the care taken to prepare them for the solemn action of devoting a fellow-creature to death; in performing which they occupy the place of God, whose ministers they are, appointed to condemn such only as have incurred his condemnation.

For the same reason, to act as faithful administrators of the divine power of taking away human life, they are bound to form their judgement solely according to the depositions of the witnesses, and according to all the other forms prescribed to them; after which they can pronounce conscientiously only according to law, and can judge worthy of death those only whom the law condemns to that penalty. And then, fathers, if the command of God obliges them to deliver over to punishment the bodies of the unhappy culprits, the same divine statute binds them to look after the interests of their guilty souls, and binds them the more to this just because they are guilty; so that they are not delivered up to execution till after

they have been afforded the means of providing for their consciences. All this is quite fair and innocent; and yet, such is the abhorrence of the Church to blood that she judges those to be incapable of ministering at her altars who have borne any share in passing or executing a sentence of death, accompanied though it be with these religious circumstances; from which we may easily conceive what idea the Church entertains of murder.

Such, then, being the manner in which human life is disposed of by the legal forms of justice, let us now see how you dispose of it. According to your modern system of legislation, there is but one judge, and that judge is no other than the offended party. He is at once the judge, the party, and the executioner. He himself demands from himself the death of his enemy; he condemns him, he executes him on the spot; and, without the least respect either for the soul or the body of his brother, he murders and damns him for whom Jesus Christ died; and all this for the sake of avoiding a blow on the cheek, or a slander, or an offensive word, or some other offence of a similar nature, for which, if a magistrate, in the exercise of legitimate authority, were condemning any to die, he would himself be impeached; for, in such cases, the laws are very far indeed from condemning any to death. In one word, to crown the whole of this extravagance, the person who kills his neighbour in this style, without authority and in the face of all law, contracts no sin and commits no disorder, though he should be religious and even a priest! Where are we, fathers? Are these really religious, and priests, who talk in this manner? Are they Christians? are they Turks? are they men? or are they demons? And are these “the mysteries revealed by the Lamb to his Society”? or are they not rather abominations suggested by the Dragon to those who take part with him?

To come to the point, with you, fathers, whom do you wish to be taken for?-for the children of the Gospel, or for the enemies of the Gospel? You must be ranged either on the one side or on the other; for there is no medium here. “He that is not with Jesus Christ is against him.” Into these two classes all mankind are divided. There are, according to St. Augustine, two peoples and two worlds,

scattered abroad over the earth. There is the world of the children of God, who form one body, of which Jesus Christ is the king and the head; and there is the world at enmity with God, of which the devil is the king and the head. Hence Jesus Christ is called the King and God of the world, because he has everywhere his subjects and worshippers; and hence the devil is also termed in Scripture the prince of this world, and the god of this world, because he has everywhere his agents and his slaves. Jesus Christ has imposed upon the Church, which is his empire, such laws as he, in his eternal wisdom, was pleased to ordain; and the devil has imposed on the world, which is his kingdom, such laws as he chose to establish. Jesus Christ has associated honour with suffering; the devil with not suffering. Jesus Christ has told those who are smitten on the one cheek to turn the other also; and the devil has told those who are threatened with a buffet to kill the man that would do them such an injury. Jesus Christ pronounces those happy who share in his reproach; and the devil declares those to be unhappy who lie under ignominy. Jesus Christ says: Woe unto you when men shall speak well of you! and the devil says: Woe unto those of whom the world does not speak with esteem!

Judge, then, fathers, to which of these kingdoms you belong. You have heard the language of the city of peace, the mystical Jerusalem; and you have heard the language of the city of confusion, which Scripture terms “the spiritual Sodom.” Which of these two languages do you understand? which of them do you speak? Those who are on the side of Jesus Christ have, as St. Paul teaches us, the same mind which was also in him; and those who are the children of the devil- ex patre diabolo- who has been a murderer from the beginning, according to the saying of Jesus Christ, follow the maxims of the devil. Let us hear, therefore, the language of your school. I put this question to your doctors: When a person has given me a blow on the cheek, ought I rather to submit to the injury than kill the offender? or may I not kill the man in order to escape the affront? Kill him by all means- it is quite lawful! exclaim, in one breath, Lessius, Molina, Escobar, Reginald, Filiutius, Baldelle, and other Jesuits. Is that the language of Jesus Christ? One

question more: Would I lose my honour by tolerating a box on the ear, without killing the person that gave it? “Can there be a doubt,” cries Escobar, “that so long as a man suffers another to live who has given him a buffet, that man remains without honour?” Yes, fathers, without that honour which the devil transfuses, from his own proud spirit into that of his proud children. This is the honour which has ever been the idol of worldly-minded men. For the preservation of this false glory, of which the god of this world is the appropriate dispenser, they sacrifice their lives by yielding to the madness of duelling; their honour, by exposing themselves to ignominious punishments; and their salvation, by involving themselves in the peril of damnation- a peril which, according to the canons of the Church, deprives them even of Christian burial. We have reason to thank God, however, for having enlightened the mind of our monarch with ideas much purer than those of your theology. His edicts bearing so severely on this subject, have not made duelling a crime- they only punish the crime which is inseparable from duelling. He has checked, by the dread of his rigid justice, those who were not restrained by the fear of the justice of God; and his piety has taught him that the honour of Christians consists in their observance of the mandates of Heaven and the rules of Christianity, and not in the pursuit of that phantom which, airy and unsubstantial as it is, you hold to be a legitimate apology for murder. Your murderous decisions being thus universally detested, it is highly advisable that you should now change your sentiments, if not from religious principle, at least from motives of policy. Prevent, fathers, by a spontaneous condemnation of these inhuman dogmas, the melancholy consequences which may result from them, and for which you will be responsible. And to impress your minds with a deeper horror at homicide, remember that the first crime of fallen man was a murder, committed on the person of the first holy man; that the greatest crime was a murder, perpetrated on the person of the King of saints; and that, of all crimes, murder is the only one which involves in a common destruction the Church and the state, nature and religion.

I have just seen the answer of your apologist to my Thirteenth Letter, but if he has nothing better to produce in the shape of a reply to that letter, which obviates the greater part of his objections, he will not deserve a rejoinder. I am sorry to see him perpetually digressing from his subject, to indulge in rancorous abuse both of the living and the dead. But, in order to gain some credit to the stories with which you have furnished him, you should not have made him publicly disavow a fact so notorious as that of the buffet of Compiegne. Certain it is, fathers, from the deposition of the injured party, that he received upon his cheek a blow from the hand of a Jesuit; and all that your friends have been able to do for you has been to raise a doubt whether he received the blow with the back or the palm of the hand, and to discuss the question whether a stroke on the cheek with the back of the hand can be properly denominated a buffet. I know not to what tribunal it belongs to decide this point; but shall content myself, in the meantime, with believing that it was, to say the very least, a probable buffet. This gets me off with a safe conscience.

LETTER XV. TO THE REVEREND FATHERS, THE JESUITS



NOVEMBER 25, 1656

REVEREND FATHERS,

As your scurrilities are daily increasing, and as you are employing them in the merciless abuse of all pious persons opposed to your errors, I feel myself obliged, for their sake and that of the Church, to bring out that grand secret of your policy, which I promised to disclose some time ago, in order that all may know, through means of your own maxims, what degree of credit is due to your calumnious accusations.

I am aware that those who are not very well acquainted with you are at a great loss what to think on this subject, as they find themselves under the painful necessity, either of believing the incredible crimes with which you charge your opponents, or (what is equally incredible) of setting you down as slanderers. "Indeed!" they exclaim, "were these things not true, would clergymen publish them to the world- would they debauch their consciences and damn themselves by venting such libels?" Such is their way of reasoning, and thus it is that the palpable proof of your falsifications coming into collision with their opinion of your honesty, their minds hang in a state of suspense between the evidence of truth, which they cannot gainsay, and the demands of charity, which they would not violate. It follows that since their high esteem for you is the only thing that prevents them from discrediting your calumnies, if we can succeed in convincing them that you have quite a different idea of calumny from that which they suppose you to have, and that you actually believe that in blackening and defaming your adversaries you are working out your own salvation, there can be little question that the weight of truth will determine them immediately to pay no regard to your accusations. This, fathers, will be the subject of the present letter.

My design is not simply to show that your writings are full of calumnies; I mean to go a step beyond this. It is quite possible for a person to say a number of false things believing them to be true; but the character of a liar implies the intention to tell lies. Now I undertake to prove, fathers, that it is your deliberate intention to tell lies, and that it is both knowingly and purposely that you load your opponents with crimes of which you know them to be innocent, because you believe that you may do so without falling from a state of grace. Though you doubtless know this point of your morality as well as I do, this need not prevent me from telling you about it; which I shall do, were it for no other purpose than to convince all men of its existence, by showing them that I can maintain it to your face, while you cannot have the assurance to disavow it, without confirming, by that very disavowment, the charge which I bring against you.

The doctrine to which I allude is so common in your schools that you have maintained it not only in your books, but, such is your assurance, even in your public theses; as, for example, in those delivered at Louvain in the year 1645, where it occurs in the following terms: “What is it but a venial sin to culminate and forge false accusations to ruin the credit of those who speak evil of us?” So settled is this point among you that, if any one dare to oppose it, you treat him as a blockhead and a hare-brained idiot. Such was the way in which you treated Father Quiroga, the German Capuchin, when he was so unfortunate as to impugn the doctrine. The poor man was instantly attacked by Dicastille, one of your fraternity; and the following is a specimen of the manner in which he manages the dispute: “A certain rueful-visaged, bare-footed, cowled friar-cucullatus gymnopoda- whom I do not choose to name, had the boldness to denounce this opinion, among some women and ignorant people, and to allege that it was scandalous and pernicious against all good manners, hostile to the peace of states and societies, and, in short, contrary to the judgement not only of all Catholic doctors, but of all true Catholics. But in opposition to him I maintained, as I do still, that calumny, when employed against a calumniator, though it should be a falsehood, is not a mortal sin, either against justice or charity: and, to prove the

point, I referred him to the whole body of our fathers, and to whole universities, exclusively composed of them whom I had consulted on the subject; and among others the reverend Father John Gans, confessor to the Emperor; the reverend Father Daniel Bastele, confessor to the Archduke Leopold; Father Henri, who was preceptor to these two princes; all the public and ordinary professors of the university of Vienna" (wholly composed of Jesuits); "all the professors of the university of Gratz" (all Jesuits); "all the professors of the university of Prague" (where Jesuits are the masters);- "from all of whom I have in my possession approbations of my opinions, written and signed with their own hands; besides having on my side the reverend Father Panalossa, a Jesuit, preacher to the Emperor and the King of Spain; Father Pilliceroli, a Jesuit, and many others, who had all judged this opinion to be probable, before our dispute began." You perceive, fathers, that there are few of your opinions which you have been at more pains to establish than the present, as indeed there were few of them of which you stood more in need. For this reason, doubtless, you have authenticated it so well that the casuists appeal to it as an indubitable principle. "There can be no doubt," says Caramuel, "that it is a probable opinion that we contract no mortal sin by calumniating another, in order to preserve our own reputation. For it is maintained by more than twenty grave doctors, by Gaspard Hurtado, and Dicastille, Jesuits, &c.; so that, were this doctrine not probable, it would be difficult to find any one such in the whole compass of theology."

Wretched indeed must that theology be, and rotten to the very core, which, unless it has been decided to be safe in conscience to defame our neighbor's character to preserve our own, can hardly boast of a safe decision on any other point! How natural is it, fathers, that those who hold this principle should occasionally put it in practice! corrupt propensity of mankind leans so strongly in that direction of itself that, the obstacle of conscience once being removed, it would be folly to suppose that it will not burst forth with all its native impetuosity. If you desire an example of this, Caramuel will furnish you with one that occurs in the same passage: "This maxim of Father Dicastille," he says,

“having been communicated by a German countess to the daughters of the Empress, the belief thus impressed on their minds that calumny was only a venial sin, gave rise in the course of a few days to such an immense number of false and scandalous tales that the whole court was thrown into a flame and fill ed with alarm. It is easy, indeed, to conceive what a fine use these ladies would make of the new light they had acquired. Matters proceeded to such a length, that it was found necessary to call in the assistance of a worthy Capuchin friar, a man of exemplary life, called Father Quiroga” (the very man whom Dicastille rails at so bitterly), “who assured them that the maxim was most pernicious, especially among women, and was at the greatest pains to prevail upon the Empress to abolish the practice of it entirely.” We have no reason, therefore, to be surprised at the bad effects of this doctrine; on the contrary, the wonder would be if it had failed to produce them. Self-love is always ready enough to whisper in our ear, when we are attacked, that we suffer wrongfully; and more particularly in your case, fathers, whom vanity has blinded so egregiously as to make you believe that to wound the honour of your Society is to wound that of the Church. There would have been good ground to look on it as something miraculous, if you had not reduced this maxim to practice. Those who do not know you are ready to say: How could these good fathers slander their enemies, when they cannot do so but at the expense of their own salvation? But, if they knew you better, the question would be: How could these good fathers forego the advantage of decrying their enemies, when they have it in their power to do so without hazarding their salvation? Let none, therefore, henceforth be surprised to find the Jesuits calumniators; they can exercise this vocation with a safe conscience; there is no obstacle in heaven or on earth to prevent them. In virtue of the credit they have acquired in the world, they can practise defamation without dreading the justice of mortals; and, on the strength of their self-assumed authority in matters of conscience, they have invented maxims for enabling them to do it without any fear of the justice of God.

This, fathers, is the fertile source of your base slanders. On this principle was Father Brisacier led to scatter his calumnies about him, with such zeal as to draw down on his head the censure of the late Archbishop of Paris. Actuated by the same motives, Father D'Anjou launched his invectives from the pulpit of the Church of St. Benedict in Paris on the 8th of March, 1655, against those honourable gentlemen who were intrusted with the charitable funds raised for the poor of Picardy and Champagne, to which they themselves had largely contributed; and, uttering a base falsehood, calculated (if your slanders had been considered worthy of any credit) to dry up the stream of that charity, he had the assurance to say, "that he knew, from good authority, that certain persons had diverted that money from its proper use, to employ it against the Church and the State"; a calumny which obliged the curate of the parish, who is a doctor of the Sorbonne, to mount the pulpit the very next day, in order to give it the lie direct. To the same source must be traced the conduct of your Father Crasset, who preached calumny at such a furious rate in Orleans that the Archbishop of that place was under the necessity of interdicting him as a public slanderer. In this mandate, dated the 9th of September last, his lordship declares: "That whereas he had been informed that Brother Jean Crasset, priest of the Society of Jesus, had delivered from the pulpit a discourse filled with falsehoods and calumnies against the ecclesiastics of this city, falsely and maliciously charging them with maintaining impious and heretical propositions, such as: That the commandments of God are impracticable; that internal grace is irresistible; that Jesus Christ did not die for all men; and others of a similar kind, condemned by Innocent X: he therefore hereby interdicts the aforesaid Crasset from preaching in his diocese, and forbids all his people to hear him, on pain of mortal disobedience." The above, fathers, is your ordinary accusation, and generally among the first that you bring against all whom it is your interest to denounce. And, although you should find it as impossible to substantiate the charge against any of them, as Father Crasset did in the case of the clergy of Orleans, your peace of conscience will not be in the least disturbed on that account; for you believe that this mode of

calumniating your adversaries is permitted you with such certainty that you have no scruple to avow it in the most public manner, and in the face of a whole city.

A remarkable proof of this may be seen in the dispute you had with M. Puys, curate of St. Nisier at Lyons; and the story exhibits so complete an illustration of your spirit that I shall take the liberty of relating some of its leading circumstances. You know, fathers, that, in the year 1649, M. Puys translated into French an excellent book, written by another Capuchin friar, On the duty which Christians owe to their own parishes, against those that would lead them away from them, without using a single invective, or pointing to any monk or any order of monks in particular. Your fathers, however, were pleased to put the cap on their own heads; and without any respect to an aged pastor, a judge in the Primacy of France, and a man who was held in the highest esteem by the whole city, Father Alby wrote a furious tract against him, which you sold in your own church upon Assumption Day; in which book, among other various charges, he accused him of having made himself scandalous by his gallantries," described him as suspected of having no religion, as a heretic, excommunicated, and, in short, worthy of the stake. To this M. Puys made a reply; and Father Alby, in a second publication, supported his former allegations. Now, fathers, is it not a clear point either that you were calumniators, or that you believed all that you alleged against that worthy priest to be true; and that, on this latter assumption, it became you to see him purified from all these abominations before judging him worthy of your friendship? Let us see, then, what happened at the accommodation of the dispute, which took place in the presence of a great number of the principal inhabitants of the town on the 25th of September, 1650. Before all these witnesses M. Puys made a declaration, which was neither more nor less than this: "That what he had written was not directed against the fathers of the Society of Jesus; that he had spoken in general of those who alienated the faithful from their parishes, without meaning by that to attack the Society; and that, so far from having such an intention, the Society was the object of his esteem and affection." By virtue of these words alone, without either retraction or absolution, M. Puys recovered, all

at once, from his apostasy, his scandals, and his excommunication; and Father Alby immediately thereafter addressed him in the following express terms: “Sir, it was in consequence of my believing that you meant to attack the Society to which I have the honour to belong that I was induced to take up the pen in its defence; and I considered that the mode of reply which I adopted was such as I was permitted to employ. But, on a better understanding of your intention, I am now free to declare that there is nothing in your work to prevent me from regarding you as a man of genius, enlightened in judgement, profound and orthodox in doctrine, and irreproachable in manners; in one word, as a pastor worthy of your Church. It is with much pleasure that I make this declaration, and I beg these gentlemen to remember what I have now said.”

They do remember it, fathers; and, allow me to add, they were more scandalized by the reconciliation than by the quarrel. For who can fail to admire this speech of Father Alby? He does not say that he retracts, in consequence of having learnt that a change had taken place in the faith and manners of M. Puys, but solely because, having understood that he had no intention of attacking your Society, there was nothing further to prevent him from regarding the author as a good Catholic. He did not then believe him to be actually a heretic! And yet, after having, contrary to his conviction, accused him of this crime, he will not acknowledge he was in the wrong, but has the hardihood to say that he considered the method he adopted to be “such as he was permitted to employ!”

What can you possibly mean, fathers, by so publicly avowing the fact that you measure the faith and the virtue of men only by the sentiments they entertain towards your Society? Had you no apprehension of making yourselves pass, by your own acknowledgement, as a band of swindlers and slanderers? What, fathers! must the same individual without undergoing any personal transformation, but simply according as you judge him to have honoured or assailed your community, be “pious” or “impious,” “irreproachable” or “excommunicated,” “a pastor worthy of the Church,” or “worthy of the stake”; in short, “a Catholic” or “a heretic”? To attack your Society and to be a heretic are,

therefore, in your language, convertible terms! An odd sort of heresy this, fathers! And so it would appear that, when we see many good Catholics branded, in your writings, by the name of heretia, it means nothing more than that you think they attack you! It is well, fathers, that we understand this strange dialect, according to which there can be no doubt that I must be a great heretic. It is in this sense, then, that you so often favour me with this appellation! Your sole reason for cutting me off from the Church is because you conceive that my letters have done you harm; and, accordingly, all that I have to do, in order to become a good Catholic, is either to approve of your extravagant morality, or to convince you that my sole aim in exposing it has been your advantage. The former I could not do without renouncing every sentiment of piety that I ever possessed; and the latter you will be slow to acknowledge till you are well cured of your errors. Thus am I involved in heresy, after a very singular fashion; for, the purity of my faith being of no avail for my exculpation, I have no means of escaping from the charge, except either by turning traitor to my own conscience, or by reforming yours. Till one or other of these events happen, I must remain a reprobate and a slanderer; and, let me be ever so faithful in my citations from your writings, you will go about crying everywhere: “What an instrument of the devil must that man be, to impute to us things of which there is not the least mark or vestige to be found in our books!” And, by doing so, you will only be acting in conformity with your fixed maxim and your ordinary practice: to such latitude does your privilege of telling lies extend! Allow me to give you an example of this, which I select on purpose; it will give me an opportunity of replying, at the same time, to your ninth Imposture: for, in truth, they only deserve to be refuted in passing.

About ten or twelve years ago, you were accused of holding that maxim of Father Bauny, “that it is permissible to seek directly (primo et per se) a proximate occasion of sin, for the spiritual or temporal good of ourselves or our neighbour” (tr.4, q.14); as an example of which, he observes: “It is allowable to visit infamous places, for the purpose of converting abandoned females, even although the practice should be very likely to lead into sin, as in the case of one who has

found from experience that he has frequently yielded to their temptations." What answer did your Father Caussin give to this charge in the year 1644? "Just let any one look at the passage in Father Bauny," said he, "let him peruse the page, the margins, the preface, the appendix, in short, the whole book from beginning to end, and he will not discover the slightest vestige of such a sentence, which could only enter into the mind of a man totally devoid of conscience, and could hardly have been forged by any other but an instrument of Satan." Father Pintereau talks in the same style: "That man must be lost to all conscience who would teach so detestable a doctrine; but he must be worse than a devil who attributes it to Father Bauny. Reader, there is not a single trace or vestige of it in the whole of his book." Who would not believe that persons talking in this tone have good reason to complain, and that Father Bauny has, in very deed, been misrepresented? Have you ever asserted anything against me in stronger terms? And, after such a solemn asseveration, that "there was not a single trace or vestige of it in the whole book, " who would imagine that the passage is to be found, word for word, in the place referred to?

Truly, fathers, if this be the means of securing your reputation, so long as you remain unanswered, it is also, unfortunately, the means of destroying it forever, so soon as an answer makes its appearance. For so certain is it that you told a lie at the period before mentioned, that you make no scruple of acknowledging, in your apologies of the present day, that the maxim in question is to be found in the very place which had been quoted; and, what is most extraordinary, the same maxim which, twelve years ago, was "detestable," has now become so innocent that in your ninth Imposture () you accuse me of "ignorance and malice, in quarrelling with Father Bauny for an opinion which has not been rejected in the School." What an advantage it is, fathers, to have to do with people that deal in contradictions! I need not the aid of any but yourselves to confute you; for I have only two things to show: first, That the maxim in dispute is a worthless one; and, secondly, That it belongs to Father Bauny; and I can prove both by your own confession. In 1644, you confessed that it was "detestable"; and, in 1656, you

avow that it is Father Bauny's. This double acknowledgement completely justifies me, fathers; but it does more, it discovers the spirit of your policy. For, tell me, pray, what is the end you propose to yourselves in your writings? Is it to speak with honesty? No, fathers; that cannot be, since your defences destroy each other. Is it to follow the truth of the faith? As little can this be your end; since, according to your own showing, you authorize a "detestable" maxim. But, be it observed that while you said the maxim was "detestable," you denied, at the same time, that it was the property of Father Bauny, and so he was innocent; and when you now acknowledge it to be his, you maintain, at the same time, that it is a good maxim, and so he is innocent still. The innocence of this monk, therefore, being the only thing common to your two answers, it is obvious that this was the sole end which you aimed at in putting them forth; and that, when you say of one and the same maxim, that it is in a certain book, and that it is not; that it is a good maxim, and that it is a bad one; your sole object is to whitewash some one or other of your fraternity; judging in the matter, not according to the truth, which never changes, but according to your own interest, which is varying every hour. Can I say more than this? You perceive that it amounts to a demonstration; but it is far from being a singular instance, and, to omit a multitude of examples of the same thing, I believe you will be contented with my quoting only one more.

You have been charged, at different times, with another proposition of the same Father Bauny, namely:. "That absolution ought to be neither denied nor deferred in the case of those who live in the habits of sin against the law of God, of nature, and of the Church, although there should be no apparent prospect of future amendment- etsi emendationis futurae spes nulla appareat." Now, with regard to this maxim, I beg you to tell me, fathers, which of the apologies that have been made for it is most to your liking; whether that of Father Pintereau, or that of Father Brisacier, both of your Society, who have defended Father Bauny, in your two different modes- the one by condemning the proposition, but disavowing it to be Father Bauny's; the other by allowing it to be Father Bauny's, but vindicating the proposition? Listen, then, to their respective deliverances.

Here comes that of Father Pintereau (): “I know not what can be called a transgression of all the bounds of modesty, a step beyond all ordinary impudence, if the imputation to Father Bauny of so damnable a doctrine is not worthy of that designation. Judge, reader, of the baseness of that calumny; see what sort of creatures the Jesuits have to deal with; and say if the author of so foul a slander does not deserve to be regarded from henceforth as the interpreter of the father of lies.” Now for Father Brisacier: “It is true, Father Bauny says what you allege.” (That gives the lie direct to Father Pintereau, plain enough.) “But,” adds he, in defence of Father Bauny, “if you who find so much fault with this sentiment wait, when a penitent lies at your feet, till his guardian angel find security for his rights in the inheritance of heaven; if you wait till God the Father swear by himself that David told a lie, when he said by the Holy Ghost that ‘all men are liars,’ fallible and perfidious; if you wait till the penitent be no longer a liar, no longer frail and changeable, no longer a sinner, like other men; if you wait, I say, till then, you will never apply the blood of Jesus Christ to a single soul.”

What do you really think now, fathers, of these impious and extravagant expressions? According to them, if we would wait “till there be some hope of amendment” in sinners before granting their absolution, we must wait “till God the Father swear by himself,” that they will never fall into sin any more! What, fathers! is no distinction to be made between hope and certainty? How injurious is it to the grace of Jesus Christ to maintain that it is so impossible for Christians ever to escape from crimes against the laws of God, nature, and the Church, that such a thing cannot be looked for, without supposing “that the Holy Ghost has told a lie”; and, if absolution is not granted to those who give no hope of amendment, the blood of Jesus Christ will be useless, forsooth, and would never be applied to a single soul!” To what a sad pass have you come, fathers by this extravagant desire of upholding the glory of your authors, when you can find only two ways of justifying them- by imposture or by impiety; and when the most innocent mode by which you can extricate yourselves is by the barefaced denial of facts as patent as the light of day!

This may perhaps account for your having recourse so frequently to that very convenient practice. But this does not complete the sum of your accomplishments in the art of self-defence. To render your opponents odious, you have had recourse to the forging of documents, such as that Letter of a Minister to M. Arnauld, which you circulated through all Paris, to induce the belief that the work on Frequent Communion, which had been approved by so many bishops and doctors, but which, to say the truth, was rather against you, had been concocted through secret intelligence with the ministers of Charenton. At other times, you attribute to your adversaries writings full of impiety, such as the Circular Letter of the Jansenists, the absurd style of which renders the fraud too gross to be swallowed, and palpably betrays the malice of your Father Meynier, who has the impudence to make use of it for supporting his foulest slanders. Sometimes, again, you will quote books which were never in existence, such as The Constitution of the Holy Sacrament, from which you extract passages, fabricated at pleasure and calculated to make the hair on the heads of certain good simple people, who have no idea of the effrontery with which you can invent and propagate falsehoods, actually to bristle with horror. There is not, indeed, a single species of calumny which you have not put into requisition; nor is it possible that the maxim which excuses the vice could have been lodged in better hands.

But those sorts of slander to which we have adverted are rather too easily discredited; and, accordingly, you have others of a more subtle character, in which you abstain from specifying particulars, in order to preclude your opponents from getting any hold, or finding any means of reply; as, for example, when Father Brisacier says that “his enemies are guilty of abominable crimes, which he does not choose to mention.” Would you not think it were impossible to prove a charge so vague as this to be a calumny? An able man, however, has found out the secret of it; and it is a Capuchin again, fathers. You are unlucky in Capuchins, as times now go; and I foresee that you may be equally so some other time in Benedictines. The name of this Capuchin is Father Valerien, of the house of the Counts of Magnis. You shall hear, by this brief narrative, how he answered your

calumnies. He had happily succeeded in converting Prince Ernest, the Landgrave of Hesse-Rheinsfelt. Your fathers, however, seized, as it would appear, with some chagrin at seeing a sovereign prince converted without their having had any hand in it, immediately wrote a book against the friar (for good men are everywhere the objects of your persecution), in which, by falsifying one of his passages, they ascribed to him an heretical doctrine. They also circulated a letter against him, in which they said: "Ah, we have such things to disclose" (without mentioning what) "as will gall you to the quick! If you don't take care, we shall be forced to inform the pope and the cardinals about it." This manoeuvre was pretty well executed; and I doubt not, fathers, but you may speak in the same style of me; but take warning from the manner in which the friar answered in his book, which was printed last year at Prague (p.112, &c.): "What shall I do," he says, "to counteract these vague and indefinite insinuations? How shall I refute charges which have never been specified? Here, however, is my plan. I declare, loudly and publicly, to those who have threatened me, that they are notorious slanderers and most impudent liars, if they do not discover these crimes before the whole world. Come forth, then, mine accusers! and publish your lies upon the house-tops, in place of telling them in the ear, and keeping yourselves out of harm's way by telling them in the ear. Some may think this a scandalous way of managing the dispute. It was scandalous, I grant, to impute to me such a crime as heresy, and to fix upon me the suspicion of many others besides; but, by asserting my innocence, I am merely applying the proper remedy to the scandal already in existence."

Truly, fathers, never were your reverences more roughly handled, and never was a poor man more completely vindicated. Since you have made no reply to such a peremptory challenge, it must be concluded that you are unable to discover the slightest shadow of criminality against him. You have had very awkward scrapes to get through occasionally; but experience has made you nothing the wiser. For, some time after this happened, you attacked the same individual in a similar strain, upon another subject; and he defended himself after the same spirited manner, as follows: "This class of men, who have become an intolerable

nuisance to the whole of Christendom, aspire, under the pretext of good works, to dignities and domination, by perverting to their own ends almost all laws, human and divine, natural and revealed. They gain over to their side, by their doctrine, by the force of fear, or of persuasion, the great ones of the earth, whose authority they abuse for the purpose of accomplishing their detestable intrigues. Meanwhile their enterprises, criminal as they are, are neither punished nor suppressed; on the contrary, they are rewarded; and the villains go about them with as little fear or remorse as if they were doing God service. Everybody is aware of the fact I have now stated; everybody speaks of it with execration; but few are found capable of opposing a despotism so powerful. This, however, is what I have done. I have already curbed their insolence; and, by the same means, I shall curb it again. I declare, then, that they are most impudent liars- mentiris impudentissime. If the charges they have brought against me be true, let them prove it; otherwise they stand convicted of falsehood, aggravated by the grossest effrontery. Their procedure in this case will show who has the right upon his side. I desire all men to take a particular observation of it; and beg to remark, in the meantime, that this precious cabal, who will not suffer the most trifling charge which they can possibly repel to lie upon them, made a show of enduring, with great patience, those from which they cannot vindicate themselves, and conceal, under a counterfeit virtue, their real impotency. My object, therefore, in provoking their modesty by this sharp retort, is to let the plainest people understand that, if my enemies hold their peace, their forbearance must be ascribed, not to the meekness of their natures, but to the power of a guilty conscience." He concludes with the following sentence: "These gentry, whose history is well known throughout the whole world, are so glaringly iniquitous in their measures, and have become so insolent in their impunity, that if I did not detest their conduct, and publicly express my detestation too, not merely for my own vindication, but to guard the simple against its seducing influence, I must have renounced my allegiance to Jesus Christ and his Church."

Reverend fathers, there is no room for tergiversation. You must pass for convicted slanderers, and take comfort in your old maxim that calumny is no crime. This honest friar has discovered the secret of shutting your mouths; and it must be employed on all occasions when you accuse people without proof. We have only to reply to each slander as it appears, in the words of the Capuchin: "Mentiris impudentissime- You are most impudent liars." For instance, what better answer does Father Brisacier deserve when he says of his opponents that they are "the gates of hell; the devil's bishops; persons devoid of faith, hope, and charity; the builders of Antichrist's exchequer"; adding, "I say this of him, not by way of insult, but from deep conviction of its truth"? Who would be at the pains to demonstrate that he is not "a gate of hell," and that he has no concern with "the building up of Antichrist's exchequer"?

In like manner, what reply is due to all the vague speeches of this sort which are to be found in your books and advertisements on my letters; such as the following, for example: "That restitutions have been converted to private uses, and thereby creditors have been reduced to beggary; that bags of money have been offered to learned monks, who declined the bribe; that benefices are conferred for the purpose of disseminating heresies against the faith; that pensioners are kept in the houses of the most eminent churchmen, and in the courts of sovereigns; that I also am a pensioner of Port-Royal; and that, before writing my letters, I had composed romances"- I, who never read one in my life, and who do not know so much as the names of those which your apologist has published? What can be said in reply to all this, fathers, if you do not mention the names of all these persons you refer to, their words, the time, and the place, except- Mentiris impudentissime? You should either be silent altogether, or relate and prove all the circumstances, as I did when I told you the anecdotes of Father Alby and John d'Alba. Otherwise, you will hurt none but yourselves. Your numerous fables might, perhaps, have done you some service, before your principles were known; but now that the whole has been brought to light, when you begin to whisper as usual, "A man of honor, who desired us to conceal his

name, has told us some horrible stories of these same people"- you will be cut short at once, and reminded of the Capuchin's "Mentiris impudentissime." Too long by far have you been permitted to deceive the world, and to abuse the confidence which men were ready to place in your calumnious accusations. It is high time to redeem the reputation of the multitudes whom you have defamed. For what innocence can be so generally known, as not to suffer some injury from the daring aspersions of a body of men scattered over the face of the earth, and who, under religious habits, conceal minds so utterly irreligious that they perpetrate crimes like calumny, not in opposition to, but in strict accordance with, their moral maxims? I cannot, therefore, be blamed for destroying the credit which might have been awarded you, seeing it must be allowed to be a much greater act of justice to restore to the victims of your obloquy the character which they did not deserve to lose, than to leave you in the possession of a reputation for sincerity which you do not deserve to enjoy. And, as the one could not be done without the other, how important was it to show you up to the world as you really are! In this letter I have commenced the exhibition; but it will require some time to complete it. Published it shall be, fathers, and all your policy will be inadequate to save you from the disgrace; for the efforts which you may make to avert the blow will only serve to convince the most obtuse observers that you were terrified out of your wits, and that, your consciences anticipating the charges I had to bring against you, you have put every oar in the water to prevent the discovery.

LETTER XVI. TO THE REVEREND FATHERS, THE JESUITS



DECEMBER 4, 1656

REVEREND FATHERS,

I now come to consider the rest of your calumnies, and shall begin with those contained in your advertisements, which remain to be noticed. As all your other writings, however, are equally well stocked with slander, they will furnish me with abundant materials for entertaining you on this topic as long as I may judge expedient. In the first place, then, with regard to the fable which you have propagated in all your writings against the Bishop of Ypres, I beg leave to say, in one word, that you have maliciously wrested the meaning of some ambiguous expressions in one of his letters which, being capable of a good sense, ought, according to the spirit of the Gospel, to have been taken in good part, and could only be taken otherwise according to the spirit of your Society. For example, when he says to a friend, "Give yourself no concern about your nephew; I will furnish him with what he requires from the money that lies in my hands," what reason have you to interpret this to mean that he would take that money without restoring it, and not that he merely advanced it with the purpose of replacing it? And how extremely imprudent was it for you to furnish a refutation of your own lie, by printing the other letters of the Bishop of Ypres, which clearly show that, in point of fact, it was merely advanced money, which he was bound to refund. This appears, to your confusion, from the following terms in the letter, to which you give the date of July 30, 1619: "Be not uneasy about the money advanced; he shall want for nothing so long as he is here"; and likewise from another, dated January 6, 1620, where he says: "You are in too great haste; when the account shall become due, I have no fear but that the little credit which I have in this place will bring me as much money as I require."

If you are convicted slanderers on this subject, you are no less so in regard to the ridiculous story about the charity-box of St. Merri. What advantage, pray, can you hope to derive from the accusation which one of your worthy friends has trumped up against that ecclesiastic? Are we to conclude that a man is guilty, because he is accused? No, fathers. Men of piety, like him, may expect to be perpetually accused, so long as the world contains calumniators like you. We must judge of him, therefore, not from the accusation, but from the sentence; and the sentence pronounced on the case (February 23, 1656) justifies him completely. Moreover, the person who had the temerity to involve himself in that iniquitous process, was disavowed by his colleagues, and himself compelled to retract his charge. And as to what you allege, in the same place, about "that famous director, who pocketed at once nine hundred thousand livres," I need only refer you to Messieurs the cures of St. Roch and St. Paul, who will bear witness, before the whole city of Paris, to his perfect disinterestedness in the affair, and to your inexcusable malice in that piece of imposition.

Enough, however, for such paltry falsities. These are but the first raw attempts of your novices, and not the master-strokes of your "grand professed." To these do I now come, fathers; I come to a calumny which is certainly one of the basest that ever issued from the spirit of your Society. I refer to the insufferable audacity with which you have imputed to holy nuns, and to their directors, the charge of "disbelieving the mystery of transubstantiation and the real presence of Jesus Christ in the eucharist." Here, fathers, is a slander worthy of yourselves. Here is a crime which God alone is capable of punishing, as you alone were capable of committing it. To endure it with patience would require an humility as great as that of these calumniated ladies; to give it credit would demand a degree of wickedness equal to that of their wretched defamers. I propose not, therefore, to vindicate them; they are beyond suspicion. Had they stood in need of defence, they might have commanded abler advocates than me. My object in what I say here is to show, not their innocence, but your malignity. I merely intend to make

you ashamed of yourselves, and to let the whole world understand that, after this, there is nothing of which you are not capable.

You will not fail, I am certain, notwithstanding all this, to say that I belong to Port-Royal; for this is the first thing you say to every one who combats your errors: as if it were only at Port-Royal that persons could be found possessed of sufficient zeal to defend, against your attacks, the purity of Christian morality. I know, fathers, the work of the pious recluses who have retired to that monastery, and how much the Church is indebted to their truly solid and edifying labours. I know the excellence of their piety and their learning. For, though I have never had the honour to belong to their establishment, as you, without knowing who or what I am, would fain have it believed, nevertheless, I do know some of them, and honour the virtue of them all. But God has not confined within the precincts of that society all whom he means to raise up in opposition to your corruptions. I hope, with his assistance, fathers, to make you feel this; and if he vouchsafe to sustain me in the design he has led me to form, of employing in his service all the resources I have received from him, I shall speak to you in such a strain as will, perhaps, give you reason to regret that you have not had to do with a man of Port-Royal. And to convince you of this, fathers, I must tell you that, while those whom you have abused with this notorious slander content themselves with lifting up their groans to Heaven to obtain your forgiveness for the outrage, I feel myself obliged, not being in the least affected by your slander, to make you blush in the face of the whole Church, and so bring you to that wholesome shame of which the Scripture speaks, and which is almost the only remedy for a hardness of heart like yours: “Imple facies eorum ignominia, et quaerent nomen tuum, Domine- Fill their faces with shame, that they may seek thy name, O Lord.”

A stop must be put to this insolence, which does not spare the most sacred retreats. For who can be safe after a calumny of this nature? For shame, fathers! to publish in Paris such a scandalous book, with the name of your Father Meynier on its front, and under this infamous title, Port-Royal and Geneva in concert against the most holy Sacrament of the Altar, in which you accuse of this apostasy, not

only Monsieur the abbe of St. Cyran, and M. Arnauld, but also Mother Agnes, his sister, and all the nuns of that monastery, alleging that "their faith, in regard to the eucharist, is as suspicious as that of M. Arnauld," whom you maintain to be "a down-right Calvinist." I here ask the whole world if there be any class of persons within the pale of the Church, on whom you could have advanced such an abominable charge with less semblance of truth. For tell me, fathers, if these nuns and their directors had been "in concert with Geneva against the most holy sacrament of the altar" (the very thought of which is shocking), how they should have come to select as the principal object of their piety that very sacrament which they held in abomination? How should they have assumed the habit of the holy sacrament? taken the name of the Daughters of the Holy Sacrament? called their church the Church of the Holy Sacrament? How should they have requested and obtained from Rome the confirmation of that institution, and the right of saying every Thursday the office of the holy sacrament, in which the faith of the Church is so perfectly expressed, if they had conspired with Geneva to banish that faith from the Church? Why would they have bound themselves, by a particular devotion, also sanctioned by the Pope, to have some of their sisterhood, night and day without intermission, in presence of the sacred host, to compensate, by their perpetual adorations towards that perpetual sacrifice, for the impiety of the heresy that aims at its annihilation? Tell me, fathers, if you can, why, of all the mysteries of our religion, they should have passed by those in which they believed, to fix upon that in which they believed not? and how they should have devoted themselves, so fully and entirely, to that mystery of our faith, if they took it, as the heretics do, for the mystery of iniquity? And what answer do you give to these clear evidences, embodied not in words only, but in actions; and not in some particular actions, but in the whole tenor of a life expressly dedicated to the adoration of Jesus Christ, dwelling on our altars? What answer, again, do you give to the books which you ascribe to Port-Royal, all of which are full of the most precise terms employed by the fathers and the councils to mark the essence of that mystery? It is at once ridiculous and disgusting to hear you replying to these as

you have done throughout your libel. M. Arnauld, say you, talks very well about transubstantiation; but he understands, perhaps, only "a significative transubstantiation." True, he professes to believe in "the real presence"; who can tell, however, but he means nothing more than "a true and real figure"? How now, fathers! whom, pray, will you not make pass for a Calvinist whenever you please, if you are to allowed the liberty of perverting the most canonical and sacred expressions by the wicked subtleties of your modern equivocations? Who ever thought of using any other terms than those in question, especially in simple discourses of devotion, where no controversies are handled? And yet the love and the reverence in which they hold this sacred mystery have induced them to give it such a prominence in all their writings that I defy you, fathers, with all your cunning, to detect in them either the least appearance of ambiguity, or the slightest correspondence with the sentiments of Geneva.

Everybody knows, fathers, that the essence of the Genevan heresy consists, as it does according to your own showing, in their believing that Jesus Christ is not contained in this sacrament; that it is impossible he can be in many places at once; that he is, properly speaking, only in heaven, and that it is as there alone that he ought to be adored, and not on the altar; that the substance of the bread remains; that the body of Jesus Christ does not enter into the mouth or the stomach; that he can only be eaten by faith, and accordingly wicked men do not eat him at all; and that the mass is not a sacrifice, but an abomination. Let us now hear, then, in what way "Port-Royal is in concert with Geneva." In the writings of the former we read, to your confusion, the following statement: That "the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ are contained under the species of bread and wine"; that "the Holy of Holies is present in the sanctuary, and that there he ought to be adored"; that "Jesus Christ dwells in the sinners who communicate, by the real and veritable presence of his body in their stomach, although not by the presence of his Spirit in their hearts"; that "the dead ashes of the bodies of the saints derive their principal dignity from that seed of life which they retain from the touch of the immortal and vivifying flesh of Jesus Christ"; that "it is not owing to any natural power, but

to the almighty power of God, to whom nothing is impossible, that the body of Jesus Christ is comprehended under the host, and under the smallest portion of every host"; that "the divine virtue is present to produce the effect which the words of consecration signify"; that "Jesus Christ, while be is lowered and hidden upon the altar, is, at the same time, elevated in his glory; that he subsists, of himself and by his own ordinary power, in divers places at the same time- in the midst of the Church triumphant, and in the midst of the Church militant and travelling"; that "the sacramental species remain suspended, and subsist extraordinarily, without being upheld by any subject; and that the body of Jesus Christ is also suspended under the species, and that it does not depend upon these, as substances depend upon accidents"; that "the substance of the bread is changed, the immutable accidents remaining the same"; that "Jesus Christ reposes in the eucharist with the same glory that he has in heaven"; that "his glorious humanity resides in the tabernacles of the Church, under the species of bread, which forms its visible covering; and that, knowing the grossness of our natures, he conducts us to the adoration of his divinity, which is present in all places, by the adoring of his humanity, which is present in a particular place"; that "we receive the body of Jesus Christ upon the tongue, which is sanctified by its divine touch"; "that it enters into the mouth of the priest"; that "although Jesus Christ has made himself accessible in the holy sacrament, by an act of his love and graciousness, he preserves, nevertheless, in that ordinance, his inaccessibility, as an inseparable condition of his divine nature; because, although the body alone and the blood alone are there, by virtue of the words- vi verborum, as the schoolmen say- his whole divinity may, notwithstanding, be there also, as well as his whole humanity, by a necessary conjunction." In fine, that "the eucharist is at the same time sacrament and sacrifice"; and that "although this sacrifice is a commemoration of that of the cross, yet there is this difference between them, that the sacrifice of the mass is offered for the Church only, and for the faithful in her communion; whereas that of the cross has been offered for all the world, as the Scripture testifies."

I have quoted enough, fathers, to make it evident that there was never, perhaps, a more imprudent thing attempted than what you have done. But I will go a step farther, and make you pronounce this sentence against yourselves. For what do you require from a man, in order to remove all suspicion of his being in concert and correspondence with Geneva? “If M. Arnauld,” says your Father Meynier, p.93, “had said that, in this adorable mystery, there is no substance of the bread under the species, but only the flesh and the blood of Jesus Christ, I should have confessed that he had declared himself absolutely against Geneva.” Confess it, then, ye revilers! and make him a public apology. How often have you seen this declaration made in the passages I have just cited? Besides this, however, the Familiar Theology of M. de St. Cyran having been approved by M. Arnauld, it contains the sentiments of both. Read, then, the whole of lesson 15th, and particularly article 2d, and you will there find the words you desiderate, even more formally stated than you have done yourselves. “Is there any bread in the host, or any wine in the chalice? No: for all the substance of the bread and the wine is taken away, to give place to that of the body and blood of Jesus Christ, the which substance alone remains therein, covered by the qualities and species of bread and wine.”

How now, fathers! will you still say that Port-Royal teaches “nothing that Geneva does not receive,” and that M. Arnauld has said nothing in his second letter “which might not have been said by a minister of Charenton”? See if you can persuade Mestrezat to speak as M. Arnauld does in that letter, on page 237. Make him say that it is an infamous calumny to accuse him of denying transubstantiation; that he takes for the fundamental principle of his writings the truth of the real presence of the Son of God, in opposition to the heresy of the Calvinists; and that he accounts himself happy for living in a place where the Holy of Holies is continually adored in the sanctuary”- a sentiment which is still more opposed to the belief of the Calvinists than the real presence itself; for, as Cardinal Richelieu observes in his Controversies (): “The new ministers of France having agreed with the Lutherans, who believe the real presence of Jesus Christ in

the eucharist; they have declared that they remain in a state of separation from the Church on the point of this mystery, only on account of the adoration which Catholics render to the eucharist." Get all the passages which I have extracted from the books of Port-Royal subscribed at Geneva, and not the isolated passages merely, but the entire treatises regarding this mystery, such as the Book of Frequent Communion, the Explication of the Ceremonies of the Mass, the Exercise during Mass, the Reasons of the Suspension of the Holy Sacrament, the Translation of the Hymns in the Hours of Port-Royal, &c.; in one word, prevail upon them to establish at Charenton that holy institution of adoring, without intermission, Jesus Christ contained in the eucharist, as is done at Port-Royal, and it will be the most signal service which you could render to the Church; for in this case it will turn out, not that Port-Royal is in concert with Geneva, but that Geneva is in concert with Port-Royal and with the whole Church.

Certainly, fathers, you could not have been more unfortunate than in selecting Port-Royal as the object of attack for not believing in the eucharist; but I will show what led you to fix upon it. You know I have picked up some small acquaintance with your policy; in this instance you have acted upon its maxims to admiration. If Monsieur the abbe of St. Cyran, and M. Arnauld, had only spoken of what ought to be believed with great respect to this mystery, and said nothing about what ought to be done in the way of preparation for its reception, they might have been the best Catholics alive; and no equivocations would have been discovered in their use of the terms real presence and transubstantiation. But, since all who combat your licentious principles must needs be heretics, and heretics, too, in the very point in which they condemn your laxity, how could M. Arnauld escape falling under this charge on the subject of the eucharist, after having published a book expressly against your profanations of that sacrament? What! must he be allowed to say, with impunity, that "the body of Jesus Christ ought not to be given to those who habitually lapse into the same crimes, and who have no prospect of amendment; and that such persons ought to be excluded, for some time, from the altar, to purify themselves by sincere penitence, that they

may approach it afterwards with benefit"? Suffer no one to talk in this strain, fathers, or you will find that fewer people will come to your confessionals. Father Brisacier says that "were you to adopt this course, you would never apply the blood of Jesus Christ to a single individual." It would be infinitely more for your interest were every one to adopt the views of your Society, as set forth by your Father Mascarenhas, in a book approved by your doctors, and even by your reverend Father-General, namely: "That persons of every description, and even priests, may receive the body of Jesus Christ on the very day they have polluted themselves with odious crimes; that, so far from such communions implying irreverence, persons who partake of them in this manner act a commendable part; that confessors ought not to keep them back from the ordinance, but, on the contrary, ought to advise those who have recently committed such crimes to communicate immediately; because, although the Church has forbidden it, this prohibition is annulled by the universal practice in all places of the earth."

See what it is, fathers, to have Jesuits in all places of the earth! Behold the universal practice which you have introduced, and which you are anxious everywhere to maintain! It matters nothing that the tables of Jesus Christ are filled with abominations, provided that your churches are crowded with people. Be sure, therefore, cost what it may, to set down all that dare to say a word against your practice as heretics on the holy sacrament. But how can you do this, after the irrefragable testimonies which they have given of their faith? Are you not afraid of my coming out with the four grand proofs of their heresy which you have adduced? You ought, at least, to be so, fathers, and I ought not to spare your blushing. Let us, then, proceed to examine proof the first.

"M. de St. Cyran," says Father Meynier, "consoling one of his friends upon the death of his mother (tom. i., let. 14), says that the most acceptable sacrifice that can be offered up to God, on such occasions, is that of patience; therefore he is a Calvinist." This is marvellously shrewd reasoning, fathers; and I doubt if anybody will be able to discover the precise point of it. Let us learn it, then, from his own mouth. "Because," says this mighty controversialist, "it is obvious that he does

not believe in the sacrifice of the mass; for this is, of all other sacrifices, the most acceptable unto God." Who will venture to say now that the do not know how to reason? Why, they know the art to such perfection that they will extract heresy out of anything you choose to mention, not even excepting the Holy Scripture itself! For example, might it not be heretical to say, with the wise man in Ecclesiasticus, "There is nothing worse than to love money"; as if adultery, murder, or idolatry, were not far greater crimes? Where is the man who is not in the habit of using similar expressions every day? May we not say, for instance, that the most acceptable of all sacrifices in the eyes of God is that of a contrite and humbled heart; just because, in discourses of this nature, we simply mean to compare certain internal virtues with one another, and not with the sacrifice of the mass, which is of a totally different order, and infinitely more exalted? Is this not enough to make you ridiculous, fathers? And is it necessary, to complete your discomfiture, that I should quote the passages of that letter in which M. de St. Cyran speaks of the sacrifice of the mass as "the most excellent" of all others, in the following terms? "Let there be presented to God, daily and in all places, the sacrifice of the body of his Son, who could not find a more excellent way than that by which he might honour his Father." And afterwards: "Jesus Christ has enjoined us to take, when we are dying, his sacrificed body, to render more acceptable to God the sacrifice of our own, and to join himself with us at the hour of dissolution; to the end that he may strengthen us for the struggle, sanctifying, by his presence, the last sacrifice which we make to God of our life and our body"? Pretend to take no notice of all this, fathers, and persist in maintaining, as you do in page 39, that he refused to take the communion on his death-bed, and that he did not believe in the sacrifice of the mass. Nothing can be too gross for calumniators by profession.

Your second proof furnishes an excellent illustration of this. To make a Calvinist of M. de St. Cyran, to whom you ascribe the book of Petrus Aurelius, you take advantage of a passage (page 80) in which Aurelius explains in what manner the Church acts towards priests, and even bishops, whom she wishes to

degrade or depose. “The Church,” he says, “being incapable of depriving them of the power of the order, the character of which is indelible, she does all that she can do: she banishes from her memory the character which she cannot banish from the souls of the individuals who have been once invested with it; she regards them in the same light as if they were not bishops or priests; so that, according to the ordinary language of the Church, it may be said they are no longer such, although they always remain such, in as far as the character is concerned- ob indelebilitatem characteris.” You perceive, fathers, that this author, who has been approved by three general assemblies of the clergy of France, plainly declares that the character of the priesthood is indelible; and yet you make him say, on the contrary, in the very same passage, that “the character of the priesthood is not indelible.” This is what I would call a notorious slander; in other words, according to your nomenclature, a small venial sin. And the reason is, this book has done you some harm by refuting the heresies of your brethren in England touching the Episcopal authority. But the folly of the charge is equally remarkable; for, after having taken it for granted, without any foundation, that M. de St. Cyran holds the priestly character to be not indelible, you conclude from this that he does not believe in the real presence of Jesus Christ in the eucharist.

Do not expect me to answer this, fathers. If you have got no common sense, I am not able to furnish you with it. All who possess any share of it will enjoy a hearty laugh at your expense. Nor will they treat with greater respect your third proof, which rests upon the following words, taken from the Book of Frequent Communion: “In the eucharist God vouchsafes us the same food that He bestows on the saints in heaven, with this difference only, that here He withholds from us its sensible sight and taste, reserving both of these for the heavenly world.” These words express the sense of the Church so distinctly that I am constantly forgetting what reason you have for picking a quarrel with them, in order to turn them to a bad use; for I can see nothing more in them than what the Council of Trent teaches (sess. xiii, c. 8), namely, that there is no difference between Jesus Christ in the eucharist and Jesus Christ in heaven, except that here he is veiled, and there

he is not. M. Arnauld does not say that there is no difference in the manner of receiving Jesus Christ, but only that there is no difference in Jesus Christ who is received. And yet you would, in the face of all reason, interpret his language in this passage to mean that Jesus Christ is no more eaten with the mouth in this world than he is in heaven; upon which you ground the charge of heresy against him.

You really make me sorry for you, fathers. Must we explain this further to you? Why do you confound that divine nourishment with the manner of receiving it? There is but one point of difference, as I have just observed, betwixt that nourishment upon earth and in heaven, which is that here it is hidden under veils which deprive us of its sensible sight and taste; but there are various points of dissimilarity in the manner of receiving it here and there, the principal of which is, as M. Arnauld expresses it (p.3, ch.16), "that here it enters into the mouth and the breast both of the good and of the wicked," which is not the case in heaven.

And, if you require to be told the reason of this diversity, I may inform you, fathers, that the cause of God's ordaining these different modes of receiving the same food is the difference that exists betwixt the state of Christians in this life and that of the blessed in heaven. The state of the Christian, as Cardinal Perron observes after the fathers, holds a middle place between the state of the blessed and the state of the Jews. The spirits in bliss possess Jesus Christ really, without veil or figure. The Jews possessed Jesus Christ only in figures and veils, such as the manna and the paschal lamb. And Christians possess Jesus Christ in the eucharist really and truly, although still concealed under veils. "God," says St. Eucher, "has made three tabernacles: the synagogue, which had the shadows only, without the truth; the Church, which has the truth and shadows together; and heaven, where there is no shadow, but the truth alone." It would be a departure from our present state, which is the state of faith, opposed by St. Paul alike to the law and to open vision, did we possess the figures only, without Jesus Christ; for it is the property of the law to have the mere figure, and not the substance of things. And it would be equally a departure from our present state if we possessed

him visibly; because faith, according to the same apostle, deals not with things that are seen. And thus the eucharist, from its including Jesus Christ truly, though under a veil, is in perfect accordance with our state of faith. It follows that this state would be destroyed, if, as the heretics maintain, Jesus Christ were not really under the species of bread and wine; and it would be equally destroyed if we received him openly, as they do in heaven: since, on these suppositions, our state would be confounded, either with the state of Judaism or with that of glory.

Such, fathers, is the mysterious and divine reason of this most divine mystery. This it is that fills us with abhorrence at the Calvinists, who would reduce us to the condition of the Jews; and this it is that makes us aspire to the glory of the beatified, where we shall be introduced to the full and eternal enjoyment of Jesus Christ. From hence you must see that there are several points of difference between the manner in which he communicates himself to Christians and to the blessed; and that, amongst others, he is in this world received by the mouth, and not so in heaven; but that they all depend solely on the distinction between our state of faith and their state of immediate vision. And this is precisely, fathers, what M. Arnauld has expressed, with great plainness, in the following terms: "There can be no other difference between the purity of those who receive Jesus Christ in the eucharist and that of the blessed, than what exists between faith and the open vision of God, upon which alone depends the different manner in which he is eaten upon earth and in heaven." You were bound in duty, fathers, to have revered in these words the sacred truths they express, instead of wresting them for the purpose of detecting an heretical meaning which they never contained, nor could possibly contain, namely, that Jesus Christ is eaten by faith only, and not by the mouth; the malicious perversion of your Fathers Annat and Meynier, which forms the capital count of their indictment.

Conscious, however, of the wretched deficiency of your proofs, you have had recourse to a new artifice, which is nothing less than to falsify the Council of Trent, in order to convict M. Arnauld of nonconformity with it; so vast is your store of methods for making people heretics. This feat has been achieved by

Father Meynier, in fifty different places of his book, and about eight or ten times in the space of a single page (the 54th), wherein he insists that to speak like a true Catholic it is not enough to say, “I believe that Jesus Christ is really present in the eucharist,” but we must say, “I believe, with the council, that he is present by a true local presence, or locally.” And, in proof of this, he cites the council, session xiii, canon 3d, canon 4th, and canon 6th. Who would not suppose, upon seeing the term local presence quoted from three canons of a universal council, that the phrase was actually to be found in them? This might have served your turn very well, before the appearance of my Fifteenth Letter; but, as matters now stand, fathers, the trick has become too stale for us. We go our way and consult the council, and discover only that you are falsifiers. Such terms as local presence, locally, and locality, never existed in the passages to which you refer; and let me tell you further, they are not to be found in any other canon of that council, nor in any other previous council, not in any father of the Church. Allow me, then, to ask you, fathers, if you mean to cast the suspicion of Calvinism upon all that have not made use of that peculiar phrase? If this be the case, the Council of Trent must be suspected of heresy, and all the holy fathers without exception. Have you no other way of making M. Arnauld heretical, without abusing so many other people who never did you any harm, and, among the rest, St. Thomas, who is one of the greatest champions of the eucharist, and who, so far from employing that term, has expressly rejected it- “Nullo modo corpus Christi est in hoc sacramento localiter.- By no means is the body of Christ in this sacrament locally”? Who are you, then, fathers, to pretend, on your authority, to impose new terms, and ordain them to be used by all for rightly expressing their faith; as if the profession of the faith, drawn up by the popes according to the plan of the council, in which this term has no place, were defective, and left an ambiguity in the creed of the faithful which you had the sole merit of discovering? Such a piece of arrogance, to prescribe these terms, even to learned doctors! such a piece of forgery, to attribute them to general councils! and such ignorance, not to know the objections which the most enlightened saints have made to their reception! “Be ashamed of

the error of your ignorance," as the Scripture says of ignorant impostors like you, "De mendacio ineruditionis tuae confundere."

Give up all further attempts, then, to act the masters; you have neither character nor capacity for the part. If, however, you would bring forward your propositions with a little more modesty, they might obtain a hearing. For, although this phrase, local presence, has been rejected, as you have seen, by St. Thomas, on the ground that the body of Jesus Christ is not in the eucharist, in the ordinary extension of bodies in their places, the expression has, nevertheless, been adopted by some modern controversial writers, who understand it simply to mean that the body of Jesus Christ is truly under the species, which being in a particular place, the body of Jesus Christ is there also. And in this sense M. Arnauld will make no scruple to admit the term, as M. de St. Cyran and he have repeatedly declared that Jesus Christ in the eucharist is truly in a particular place, and miraculously in many places at the same time. Thus all your subtleties fall to the ground; and you have failed to give the slightest semblance of plausibility to an accusation which ought not to have been allowed to show its face without being supported by the most unanswerable proofs.

But what avails it, fathers, to oppose their innocence to your calumnies? You impute these errors to them, not in the belief that they maintain heresy, but from the idea that they have done you injury. That is enough, according to your theology, to warrant you to calumniate them without criminality; and you can, without either penance or confession, say mass, at the very time that you charge priests, who say it every day, with holding it to be pure idolatry; which, were it true, would amount to sacrilege no less revolting than that of your own Father Jarrige, whom you yourselves ordered to be hanged in effigy, for having said mass "at the time he was in agreement with Geneva."

What surprises me, therefore, is not the little scrupulosity with which you load them with crimes of the foulest and falsest description, but the little prudence you display, by fixing on them charges so destitute of plausibility. You dispose of sins, it is true, at your pleasure; but do you mean to dispose of men's beliefs too?

Verily, fathers, if the suspicion of Calvinism must needs fall either on them or on you, you would stand, I fear, on very ticklish ground. Their language is as Catholic as yours; but their conduct confirms their faith, and your conduct belies it. For if you believe, as well as they do, that the bread is really changed into the body of Jesus Christ, why do you not require, as they do, from those whom you advise to approach the altar, that the heart of stone and ice should be sincerely changed into a heart of flesh and of love? If you believe that Jesus Christ is in that sacrament in a state of death, teaching those that approach it to die to the world, to sin, and to themselves, why do you suffer those to profane it in whose breasts evil passions continue to reign in all their life and vigour? And how do you come to judge those worthy to eat the bread of heaven, who are not worthy to eat that of earth?

Precious votaries, truly, whose zeal is expended in persecuting those who honour this sacred mystery by so many holy communions, and in flattering those who dishonour it by so many sacrilegious desecrations! How comely is it, in these champions of a sacrifice so pure and so venerable, to collect around the table of Jesus Christ a crowd of hardened profligates, reeking from their debauchcries; and to plant in the midst of them a priest, whom his own confessor has hurried from his obscenities to the altar; there, in the place of Jesus Christ, to offer up that most holy victim to the God of holiness, and convey it, with his polluted hands, into mouths as thoroughly polluted as his own! How well does it become those who pursue this course “in all parts of the world,” in conformity with maxims sanctioned by their own general to impute to the author of Frequent Communion, and to the Sisters of the Holy Sacrament, the crime of not believing in that sacrament!

Even this, however, does not satisfy them. Nothing less will satiate their rage than to accuse their opponents of having renounced Jesus Christ and their baptism. This is no air-built fable, like those of your invention; it is a fact, and denotes a delirious frenzy which marks the fatal consummation of your calumnies. Such a notorious falsehood as this would not have been in hands

worthy to support it, had it remained in those of your good friend Filleau, through whom you ushered it into the world: your Society has openly adopted it; and your Father Meynier maintained it the other day to be "a certain truth" that Port-Royal has, for the space of thirty-five years, been forming a secret plot, of which M. de St. Cyran and M. d'Ypres have been the ringleaders, "to ruin the mystery of the incarnation- to make the Gospel pass for an apocryphal fable- to exterminate the Christian religion, and to erect Deism upon the ruins of Christianity." Is this enough, fathers? Will you be satisfied if all this be believed of the objects of your hate? Would your animosity be glutted at length, if you could but succeed in making them odious, not only to all within the Church, by the charge of "consenting with Geneva, of which you accuse them, but even to all who believe in Jesus Christ, though beyond the pale of the Church, by the imputation of Deism?

But whom do you expect to convince, upon your simple asseveration, without the slightest shadow of proof, and in the face of every imaginable contradiction, that priests who preach nothing but the grace of Jesus Christ, the purity of the Gospel, and the obligations of baptism, have renounced at once their baptism, the Gospel, and Jesus Christ? Who will believe it, fathers? Wretched as you are, do you believe it yourselves? What a sad predicament is yours, when you must either prove that they do not believe in Jesus Christ, or must pass for the most abandoned calumniators. Prove it, then, fathers. Name that "worthy clergyman" who, you say, attended that assembly at Bourg-Fontaine in 1621, and discovered to Brother Filleau the design there concerted of overturning the Christian religion. Name those six persons whom you allege to have formed that conspiracy. Name the individual who is designated by the letters A. A., who you say "was not Antony Arnauld" (because he convinced you that he was at that time only nine years of age), "but another person, who you say is still in life, but too good a friend of M. Arnauld not to be known to him." You know him, then, fathers; and consequently, if you are not destitute of religion yourselves, you are bound to delate that impious wretch to the king and parliament, that he may be punished

according to his deserts. You must speak out, fathers; you must name the person, or submit to the disgrace of being henceforth regarded in no other light than as common liars, unworthy of being ever credited again. Good Father Valerien has taught us that this is the way in which such characters should be “put to the rack” and brought to their senses. Your silence upon the present challenge will furnish a full and satisfactory confirmation of this diabolical calumny. Your blindest admirers will be constrained to admit that it will be “the result, not of your goodness, but your impotency”; and to wonder how you could be so wicked as to extend your hatred even to the nuns of Port-Royal, and to say, as you do in page 14, that The Secret Chaplet of the Holy Sacrament, composed by one of their number, was the first fruit of that conspiracy against Jesus Christ; or, as in page 95, that “they have imbibed all the detestable principles of that work”; which is, according to your account, a lesson in Deism.” Your falsehoods regarding that book have already been triumphantly refuted, in the defence of the censure of the late Archbishop of Paris against Father Brisacier. That publication you are incapable of answering; and yet you do not scruple to abuse it in a more shameful manner than ever, for the purpose of charging women, whose piety is universally known, with the vilest blasphemy.

Cruel, cowardly persecutors! Must, then, the most retired cloisters afford no retreat from your calumnies? While these consecrated virgins are employed, night and day, according to their institution, in adoring Jesus Christ in the holy sacrament, you cease not, night nor day, to publish abroad that they do not believe that he is either in the eucharist or even at the right hand of his Father; and you are publicly excommunicating them from the Church, at the very time when they are in secret praying for the whole Church, and for you! You blacken with your slanders those who have neither ears to hear nor mouths to answer you! But Jesus Christ, in whom they are now hidden, not to appear till one day together with him, hears you, and answers for them. At the moment I am now writing, that holy and terrible voice is heard which confounds nature and consoles the Church. And I fear, fathers, that those who now harden their hearts, and refuse with obstinacy to

hear him, while he speaks in the character of God, will one day be compelled to hear him with terror, when he speaks to them in the character of a judge. What account, indeed, fathers, will you be able to render to him of the many calumnies you have uttered, seeing that he will examine them, in that day, not according to the fantasies of Fathers Dicastille, Gans, and Pennalossa, who justify them, but according to the eternal laws of truth, and the sacred ordinances of his own Church, which, so far from attempting to vindicate that crime, abhors it to such a degree that she visits it with the same penalty as wilfull murder? By the first and second councils of Arles she has decided that the communion shall be denied to slanderers as well as murderers, till the approach of death. The Council of Lateran has judged those unworthy of admission into the ecclesiastical state who have been convicted of the crime, even though they may have reformed. The popes have even threatened to deprive of the communion at death those who have calumniated bishops, priests, or deacons. And the authors of a defamatory libel, who fail to prove what they have advanced, are condemned by Pope Adrian to be whipped,- yes, reverend fathers, flagellentur is the word. So strong has been the repugnance of the Church at all times to the errors of your Society- a Society so thoroughly depraved as to invent excuses for the grossest of crimes, such as calumny, chiefly that it may enjoy the greater freedom in perpetrating them itself. There can be no doubt, fathers, that you would be capable of producing abundance of mischief in this way, had God not permitted you to furnish with your own hands the means of preventing the evil, and of rendering your slanders perfectly innocuous; for, to deprive you of all credibility, it was quite enough to publish the strange maxim that it is no crime to calumniate. Calumny is nothing, if not associated with a high reputation for honesty. The defamer can make no impression, unless he has the character of one that abhors defamation as a crime of which he is incapable. And thus, fathers, you are betrayed by your own principle. You establish the doctrine to secure yourselves a safe conscience, that you might slander without risk of damnation, and be ranked with those “pious and holy calumniators” of whom St. Athanasius speaks. To save yourselves from hell,

you have embraced a maxim which promises you this security on the faith of your doctors; but this same maxim, while it guarantees you, according to their idea, against the evils you dread in the future world, deprives you of all the advantage you may have expected to reap from it in the present; so that, in attempting to escape the guilt, you have lost the benefit of calumny. Such is the self-contrariety of evil, and so completely does it confound and destroy itself by its own intrinsic malignity.

You might have slandered, therefore, much more advantageously for yourselves, had you professed to hold, with St. Paul, that evil speakers are not worthy to see God; for in this case, though you would indeed have been condemning yourselves, your slanders would at least have stood a better chance of being believed. But, by maintaining, as you have done, that calumny against your enemies is no crime, your slanders will be discredited, and you yourselves damned into the bargain; for two things are certain, fathers: first, That it will never be in the power of your grave doctors to annihilate the justice of God; and, secondly, That you could not give more certain evidence that you are not of the Truth than by your resorting to falsehood. If the Truth were on your side, she would fight for you- she would conquer for you; and whatever enemies you might have to encounter, “the Truth would set you free” from them, according to her promise. But you have had recourse to falsehood, for no other design than to support the errors with which you flatter the sinful children of this world, and to bolster up the calumnies with which you persecute every man of piety who sets his face against these delusions. The truth being diametrically opposed to your ends, it behooved you, to use the language of the prophet, “to put your confidence in lies.” You have said: “The scourges which afflict mankind shall not come nigh unto us; for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves.” But what says the prophet in reply to such? “Forasmuch,” says he, “as ye have put your trust in calumny and tumult- sperastis in calumnia et in tumultu- this iniquity and your ruin shall be like that of a high wall whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant. And he shall break it as the breaking of the potter’s vessel

that is shivered in pieces"- with such violence that "there shall not be found in the bursting of it a shred to take fire from the hearth, or to take water withal out of the pit." "Because," as another prophet says, "ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and ye have flattered and strengthened the malice of the wicked; I will therefore deliver my people out of your hands, and ye shall know that I am their Lord and yours."

Yes, fathers, it is to be hoped that if you do not repent, God will deliver out of your hands those whom you have so long deluded, either by flattering them in their evil courses with your licentious maxims, or by poisoning their minds with your slanders. He will convince the former that the false rules of your casuists will not screen them from His indignation; and He will impress on the minds of the latter the just dread of losing their souls by listening and yielding credit to your slanders, as you lose yours by hatching these slanders and disseminating them through the world. Let no man be deceived; God is not mocked; none may violate with impunity the commandment which He has given us in the Gospel, not to condemn our neighbour without being well assured of his guilt. And, consequently, what profession soever of piety those may make who lend a willing ear to your lying devices, and under what pretence soever of devotion they may entertain them, they have reason to apprehend exclusion from the kingdom of God, solely for having imputed crimes of such a dark complexion as heresy and schism to Catholic priests and holy nuns, upon no better evidence than such vile fabrications as yours. "The devil," says M. de Geneve, "is on the tongue of him that slanders, and in the ear of him that listens to the slanderer." "And evil speaking," says St. Bernard, "is a poison that extinguishes charity in both of the parties; so that a single calumny may prove mortal to an infinite numbers of souls, killing not only those who publish it, but all those besides by whom it is not repudiated."

Reverend fathers, my letters were not wont either to be so prolix, or to follow so closely on one another. Want of time must plead my excuse for both of these faults. The present letter is a very long one, simply because I had no leisure to

make it shorter. You know the reason of this haste better than I do. You have been unlucky in your answers. You have done well, therefore, to change your plan; but I am afraid that you will get no credit for it, and that people will say it was done for fear of the Benedictines.

I have just come to learn that the person who was generally reported to be the author of your Apologies, disclaims them, and is annoyed at their having been ascribed to him. He has good reason, and I was wrong to have suspected him of any such thing; for, in spite of the assurances which I received, I ought to have considered that he was a man of too much good sense to believe your accusations, and of too much honour to publish them if he did not believe them. There are few people in the world capable of your extravagances; they are peculiar to yourselves, and mark your character too plainly to admit of any excuse for having failed to recognize your hand in their concoction. I was led away by the common report; but this apology, which would be too good for you, is not sufficient for me, who profess to advance nothing without certain proof. In no other instance have I been guilty of departing from this rule. I am sorry for what I said. I retract it; and I only wish that you may profit by my example.

LETTER XVII. TO THE REVEREND FATHER ANNAT, JESUIT



JANUARY 23, 1657

REVEREND FATHER,

Your former behaviour had induced me to believe that you were anxious for a truce in our hostilities, and I was quite disposed to agree that it should be so. Of late, however, you have poured forth such a volley of pamphlets, in such rapid succession, as to make it apparent that peace rests on a very precarious footing when it depends on the silence of Jesuits. I know not if this rupture will prove very advantageous to you; but, for my part, I am far from regretting the opportunity which it affords me of rebutting that stale charge of heresy with which your writings abound.

It is full time, indeed, that I should, once for all, put a stop to the liberty you have taken to treat me as a heretic- a piece of gratuitous impertinence which seems to increase by indulgence, and which is exhibited in your last book in a style of such intolerable assurance that, were I not to answer the charge as it deserves, I might lay myself open to the suspicion of being actually guilty. So long as the insult was confined to your associates I despised it, as I did a thousand others with which they interlarded their productions. To these my Fifteenth Letter was a sufficient reply. But you now repeat the charge with a different air: you make it the main point of your vindication. It is, in fact, almost the only thing in the shape of argument that you employ. You say that, “as a complete answer to my fifteen letters, it is enough to say fifteen times that I am a heretic; and, having been pronounced such, I deserve no credit.” In short, you make no question of my apostasy, but assume it as a settled point, on which you may build with all confidence. You are serious then, father, it would seem, in deeming me a heretic. I shall be equally serious in replying to the charge.

You are well aware, sir, that heresy is a charge of grave a character that it is an act of high presumption to advance, without being prepared to substantiate it. I now demand your proofs. When was I seen at Charenton? When did I fail in my presence at mass, or in my Christian duty to my parish church? What act of union with heretics, or of schism with the Church, can you lay to my charge? What council have I contradicted? What papal constitution have I violated? You must answer, father, else- You know what I mean. And what do you answer? I beseech all to observe it: First of all, you assume "that the author of the letters is a Port-Royalist"; then you tell us "that Port-Royal is declared to be heretical"; and, therefore, you conclude, "the author of letters must be a heretic." It is not on me, then, father, that the weight of this indictment falls, but on Port-Royal; and I am only involved in the crime because you suppose me to belong to that establishment; so that it will be no difficult matter for me to exculpate myself from the charge. I have no more to say than that I am not a member of that community; and to refer you to my letters, in which I have declared that "I am a private individual"; and again in so many words, that "I am not of Port-Royal, as I said in my Sixteenth Letter, which preceded your publication.

You must fall on some other way, then, to prove me heretic, otherwise the whole world will be convinced that it is beyond your power to make good your accusation. Prove from my writings that I do not receive the constitution. My letters are not very voluminous- there are but sixteen of them- and I defy you or anybody else to detect in them the slightest foundation for such a charge. I shall, however, with your permission, produce something out of them to prove the reverse. When, for example, I say in the Fourteenth that, "by killing our brethren in mortal sin, according to your maxims, we are damning those for whom Jesus Christ died, do I not plainly acknowledge that Jesus Christ died for those who may be damned, and, consequently, declare it to be false "that he died only for the predestinated," which is the error condemned in the fifth proposition? Certain it is, father, that I have not said a word in behalf of these impious propositions, which I detest with all my heart. And even though Port-Royal should hold them, I

protest against your drawing any conclusion from this against me, as, thank God, I have no sort of connection with any community except the Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church, in the bosom of which I desire to live and die, in communion with the Pope, the head of the Church, and beyond the pale of which I am persuaded there is no salvation.

How are you to get at a person who talks in this way, father? On what quarter will you assail me, since neither my words nor my writings afford the slightest handle to your accusations, and the obscurity in which my person is enveloped forms my protection against your threatenings? You feel yourselves smitten by an invisible hand- a hand, however, which makes your delinquencies visible to all the earth; and in vain do you endeavour to attack me in the person of those with whom you suppose me to be associated. I fear you not, either on my own account or on that of any other, being bound by no tie either to a community or to any individual whatsoever. All the influence which your Society possesses can be of no avail in my case. From this world I have nothing to hope, nothing to dread, nothing to desire. Through the goodness of God, I have no need of any man's money or any man's patronage. Thus, my father, I elude all your attempts to lay hold of me. You may touch Port-Royal, if you choose, but you shall not touch me. You may turn people out of the Sorbonne, but that will not turn me out of my domicile. You may contrive plots against priests and doctors, but not against me, for I am neither the one nor the other. And thus, father, you never perhaps had to do, in the whole course of your experience, with a person so completely beyond your reach, and therefore so admirably qualified for dealing with your errors- one perfectly free- one without engagement, entanglement, relationship, or business of any kind- one, too, who is pretty well versed in your maxims, and determined, as God shall give him light, to discuss them, without permitting any earthly consideration to arrest or slacken his endeavours.

Since, then, you can do nothing against me, what good purpose can it serve to publish so many calumnies, as you and your brethren are doing, against a class of persons who are in no way implicated in our disputes? You shall not escape under

these subterfuges: you shall be made to feel the force of the truth in spite of them. How does the case stand? I tell you that you are ruining Christian morality by divorcing it from the love of God, and dispensing with its obligation; and you talk about "the death of Father Mester"- a person whom I never saw in my life. I tell you that your authors permit a man to kill another for the sake of an apple, when it would be dishonourable to lose it; and you reply by informing me that somebody "has broken into the poor-box at St. Merri!" Again, what can you possibly mean by mixing me up perpetually with the book On the Holy Virginity, written by some father of the Oratory, whom I never saw any more than his book? It is rather extraordinary, father, that you should thus regard all that are opposed to you as if they were one person. Your hatred would grasp them all at once, and would hold them as a body of reprobates, every one of whom is responsible for all the rest.

There is a vast difference between Jesuits and all their opponents. There can be no doubt that you compose one body, united under one head; and your regulations, as I have shown, prohibit you from printing anything without the approbation of your superiors, who are responsible for all the errors of individual writers, and who "cannot excuse themselves by saying that they did not observe the errors in any publication, for they ought to have observed them." So say your ordinances, and so say the letters of your generals, Aquaviva, Vitelleschi, &c. We have good reason, therefore, for charging upon you the errors of your associates, when we find they are sanctioned by your superiors and the divines of your Society. With me, however, father, the case stands otherwise. I have not subscribed to the book of the Holy Virginity. All the alms-boxes in Paris may be broken into, and yet I am not the less a good Catholic for all that. In short, I beg to inform you, in the plainest terms, that nobody is responsible for my letters but myself, and that I am responsible for nothing but my letters.

Here, father, I might fairly enough have brought our dispute to an issue, without saying a word about those other persons whom you stigmatize as heretics, in order to comprehend me under the condemnation. But, as I have been the

occasion of their ill treatment, I consider myself bound in some sort to improve the occasion, and I shall take advantage of it in three particulars. One advantage, not inconsiderable in its way, is that it will enable me to vindicate the innocence of so many calumniated individuals. Another, not inappropriate to my subject, will be to disclose, at the same time, the artifices of your policy in this accusation. But the advantage which I prize most of all is that it affords me an opportunity of apprising the world of the falsehood of that scandalous report which you have been so busily disseminating, namely, "that the Church is divided by a new heresy." And as you are deceiving multitudes into the belief that the points on which you are raising such a storm are essential to the faith, I consider it of the last importance to quash these unfounded impressions, and distinctly to explain here what these points are, so as to show that, in point of fact, there are no heretics in the Church.

I presume, then, that were the question to be asked: Wherein consists the heresy of those called Jansenists? the immediate reply would be, "These people hold that the commandments of God are impracticable to men, that grace is irresistible, that we have not free will to do either good or evil, that Jesus Christ did not die for all men, but only for the elect; in short, they maintain the five propositions condemned by the Pope." Do you not give it out to all that this is the ground on which you persecute your opponents? Have you not said as much in your books, in your conversations, in your catechisms? A specimen of this you gave at the late Christmas festival at St. Louis. One of your little shepherdesses was questioned thus:

"For whom did Jesus Christ come into the world, my dear?"

"For all men, father."

"Indeed, my child; so you are not one of those new heretics who say that he came only for the elect?"

Thus children are led to believe you, and many others besides children; for you entertain people with the same stuff in your sermons as Father Crasset did at Orleans, before he was laid under an interdict. And I frankly own that, at one

time, I believed you myself. You had given me precisely the same idea of these good people; so that, when you pressed them on these propositions, I narrowly watched their answer, determined never to see them more, if they did not renounce them as palpable impieties.

This, however, they have done in the most unequivocal way. M. de Sainte-Beuve, king's professor in the Sorbonne, censured these propositions in his published writings long before the Pope; and other Augustinian doctors, in various publications, and, among others, in a work On Victorious Grace, reject the same articles as both heretical and strange doctrines. In the preface to that work they say that these propositions are "heretical and Lutheran, forged and fabricated at pleasure, and are neither to be found in Jansenius, nor in his defenders. " They complain of being charged with such sentiments, and address you in the words of St. Prosper, the first disciple of St. Augustine their master, to whom the semi-Pelagians of France had ascribed similar opinions, with the view of bringing him into disgrace: "There are persons who denounce us, so blinded by passion that they have adopted means for doing so which ruin their own reputation. They have, for this purpose, fabricated propositions of the most impious and blasphemous character, which they industriously circulate, to make people believe that we maintain them in the wicked sense which they are pleased to attach to them. But our reply will show at once our innocence, and the malignity of these persons who have ascribed to us a set of impious tenets, of which they are themselves the sole inventors."

Truly, father, when I found that they had spoken in this way before the appearance of the papal constitution- when I saw that they afterwards received that decree with all possible respect, that they offered to subscribe it, and that M. Arnauld had declared all this in his second letter, in stronger terms than I can report him, I should have considered it a sin to doubt their soundness in the faith. And, in fact, those who were formerly disposed to refuse absolution to M. Arnauld's friends, have since declared that, after his explicit disclaimer of the errors imputed to him, there was no reason left for cutting off either him or them

from the communion of the Church. Your associates, however, have acted very differently; and it was this that made me begin to suspect that you were actuated by prejudice.

You threatened first to compel them to sign that constitution, so long as you thought they would resist it; but no sooner did you see them quite ready of their own accord to submit to it than we heard no more about this. Still however, though one might suppose this ought to have satisfied you, you persisted in calling them heretics, “because,” said you, “their heart belies their hand; they are Catholics outwardly, but inwardly they are heretics.”

This, father, struck me as very strange reasoning; for where is the person of whom as much may not be said at any time? And what endless trouble and confusion would ensue, were it allowed to go on! “If,” says Pope St. Gregory, “we refuse to believe a confession of faith made in conformity to the sentiments of the Church, we cast a doubt over the faith of all Catholics whatsoever.” I am afraid, father, to use the words of the same pontiff when speaking of a similar dispute this time, “that your object is to make these persons heretics in spite of themselves; because to refuse to credit those who testify by their confession that they are in the true faith, is not to purge heresy, but to create it- hoc non est haeresim purgare, sed facere.” But what confirmed me in my persuasion that there was, indeed, no heretic in the Church, was finding that our so-called heretics had vindicated themselves so successfully that you were unable to accuse them of a single error in the faith, and that you were reduced to the necessity of assailing them on questions of fact only, touching Jansenius, which could not possibly be construed into heresy. You insist, it now appears, on their being compelled to acknowledge “that these propositions are contained in Jansenius, word for word, every one of them, in so many terms,” or, as you express it, “Singulares, individuae, totidem verbis apud Jansenium contentae.”

Thenceforth your dispute became, in my eyes, perfectly indifferent. So long as I believed that you were debating the truth or falsehood of the propositions, I was all attention, for that quarrel touched the faith; but when I discovered that the

bone of contention was whether they were to be found word for word in Jansenius or not, as religion ceased to be interested in the controversy, I ceased to be interested in it also. Not but that there was some presumption that you were speaking the truth; because to say that such and such expressions are to be found word for word in an author, is a matter in which there can be no mistake. I do not wonder, therefore, that so many people, both in France and at Rome, should have been led to believe, on the authority of a phrase so little liable to suspicion, that Jansenius has actually taught these obnoxious tenets. And, for the same reason, I was not a little surprised to learn that this same point of fact, which you had propounded as so certain and so important, was false; and that, after being challenged to quote the pages of Jansenius in which you had found these propositions "word for word," you have not been able to point them out to this day.

I am the more particular in giving this statement, because, in my opinion, it discovers, in a very striking light, the spirit of your Society in the whole of this affair; and because some people will be astonished to find that, notwithstanding all the facts above mentioned, you have not ceased to publish that they are heretics still. But you have only altered the heresy to suit the time; for no sooner had they freed themselves from one charge than your fathers, determined that they should never want an accusation, substituted another in its place. Thus, in 1653, their heresy lay in the quality of the propositions; then came the word for word heresy; after that we had the heart heresy. And now we hear nothing of any of these, and they must be heretics, forsooth, unless they sign a declaration to the effect "that the sense of the doctrine of Jansenius is contained in the sense of the five propositions."

Such is your present dispute. It is not enough for you that they condemn the five propositions, and everything in Jansenius that bears any resemblance to them, or is contrary to St. Augustine; for all that they have done already. The point at issue is not, for example, if Jesus Christ died for the elect only- they condemn that as much as you do; but, is Jansenius of that opinion, or not? And here I declare,

more strongly than ever, that your quarrel affects me as little as it affects the Church. For although I am no doctor, any more than you, father, I can easily see, nevertheless, that it has no connection with the faith. The only question is to ascertain what is the sense of Jansenius. Did they believe that his doctrine corresponded to the proper and literal sense of these propositions, they would condemn it; and they refuse to do so, because they are convinced it is quite the reverse; so that, although they should misunderstand it, still they would not be heretics, seeing they understand it only in a Catholic sense.

To illustrate this by an example, I may refer to the conflicting sentiments of St. Basil and St. Athanasius, regarding the writings of St. Denis of Alexandria, which St. Basil, conceiving that he found in them the sense of Arius against the equality of the Father and the Son, condemned as heretical, but which St. Athanasius, on the other hand, judging them to contain the genuine sense of the Church, maintained to be perfectly orthodox. Think you, then, father, that St. Basil, who held these writings to be Arian, had a right to brand St. Athanasius as a heretic because he defended them? And what ground would he have had for so doing, seeing that it was not Arianism that his brother defended, but the true faith which he considered these writings to contain? Had these two saints agreed about the true sense of these writings, and had both recognized this heresy in them, unquestionably St. Athanasius could not have approved of them without being guilty of heresy; but as they were at variance respecting the sense of the passage, St. Athanasius was orthodox in vindicating them, even though he may have understood them wrong; because in that case it would have been merely an error in a matter of fact, and because what he defended was really the Catholic faith, which he supposed to be contained in these writings.

I apply this to you, father. Suppose you were agreed upon the sense of Jansenius, and your adversaries were ready to admit with you that he held, for example, that grace cannot be resisted, those who refused to condemn him would be heretical. But as your dispute turns upon the meaning of that author, and they believe that, according to this doctrine, grace may be resisted, whatever heresy

you may be pleased to attribute to him, you have no ground to brand them as heretics, seeing they condemn the sense which you put on Jansenius, and you dare not condemn the sense which they put on him. If, therefore, you mean to convict them, show that the sense which they ascribe to Jansenius is heretical; for then they will be heretical themselves. But how could you accomplish this, since it is certain, according to your own showing, that the meaning which they give to his language has never been condemned?

To elucidate the point still further, I shall assume as a principle what you yourselves acknowledge- that the doctrine of efficacious grace has never been condemned, and that the pope has not touched it by his constitution. And, in fact, when he proposed to pass judgement on the five propositions, the question of efficacious grace was protected against all censure. This is perfectly evident from the judgements of the consulters to whom the Pope committed them for examination. These judgements I have in my possession, in common with many other persons in Paris, and, among the rest, the Bishop of Montpelier, who brought them from Rome. It appears from this document that they were divided in their sentiments; that the chief persons among them, such as the Master of the Sacred Palace, the commissary of the Holy Office, the General of the Augustinians, and others, conceiving that these propositions might be understood in the sense of efficacious grace, were of opinion that they ought not to be censured; whereas the rest, while they agreed that the propositions would not have merited condemnation had they borne that sense, judged that they ought to be censured, because, as they contended, this was very far from being their proper and natural sense. The Pope, accordingly, condemned them; and all parties have acquiesced in his judgement.

It is certain, then, father, that efficacious grace has not been condemned. Indeed, it is so powerfully supported by St. Augustine, by St. Thomas, and all his school, by a great many popes and councils, and by all tradition, that to tax it with heresy would be an act of impiety. Now, all those whom you condemn as heretics declare that they find nothing in Jansenius, but this doctrine of efficacious grace.

And this was the only point which they maintained at Rome. You have acknowledged this yourself when you declare that "when pleading before the pope, they did not say a single word about the propositions, but occupied the whole time in talking about efficacious grace." So that, whether they be right or wrong in this supposition, it is undeniable, at least, that what they suppose to be the sense is not heretical sense; and that, consequently, they are no heretics; for, to state the matter in two words, either Jansenius has merely taught the doctrine of efficacious grace, and in this case he has no errors; or he has taught some other thing, and in this case he has no defenders. The whole question turns on ascertaining whether Jansenius has actually maintained something different from efficacious grace; and, should it be found that he has, you will have the honour of having better understood him, but they will not have the misfortune of having erred from the faith.

It is matter of thankfulness to God, then, father, that there is in reality no heresy in the Church. The question relates entirely to a point of fact, of which no heresy can be made; for the Church, with divine authority, decides the points of faith, and cuts off from her body all who refuse to receive them. But she does not act in the same manner in regard to matters of fact. And the reason is that our salvation is attached to the faith which has been revealed to us, and which is preserved in the Church by tradition, but that it has no dependence on facts which have not been revealed by God. Thus we are bound to believe that the commandments of God are not impracticable; but we are under no obligation to know what Jansenius has said upon that subject. In the determination of points of faith, God guides the Church by the aid of His unerring Spirit; whereas in matters of fact He leaves her to the direction of reason and the senses, which are the natural judges of such matters. None but God was able to instruct the Church in the faith; but to learn whether this or that proposition is contained in Jansenius, all we require to do is to read his book. And from hence it follows that, while it is heresy to resist the decisions of the faith, because this amounts to an opposing of our own spirit to the Spirit of God, it is no heresy, though it may be an act of

presumption, to disbelieve certain particular facts, because this is no more than opposing reason- it may be enlightened reason- to an authority which is great indeed, but in this matter not infailible.

What I have now advanced is admitted by all theologians, as appears from the following axiom of Cardinal Bellarmine, a member of your Society: “General and lawful councils are incapable of error in defining the dogmas of faith; but they may err in questions of fact.” In another place he says: “The pope, as pope, and even as the head of a universal council, may err in particular controversies of fact, which depend principally on the information and testimony of men.” Cardinal Baronius speaks in the same manner: “Implicit submission is due to the decisions of councils in points of faith; but, in so far as persons and their writings are concerned, the censures which have been pronounced against them have not been so rigourously observed, because there is none who may not chance to be deceived in such matters.” I may add that, to prove this point, the Archbishop of Toulouse has deduced the following rule from the letters of two great popes- St. Leon and Pelagius II: “That the proper object of councils is the faith; and whatsoever is determined by them, independently of the faith, may be reviewed and examined anew: whereas nothing ought to be re-examined that has been decided in a matter of faith; because, as Tertullian observes, the rule of faith alone is immovable and irrevocable.”

Hence it has been seen that, while general and lawful councils have never contradicted one another in points of faith, because, as M. de Toulouse has said, “it is not allowable to examine de novo decisions in matters of faith”; several instances have occurred in which these same councils have disagreed in points of fact, where the discussion turned upon the sense of an author; because, as the same prelate observes, quoting the popes as his authorities, “everything determined in councils, not referring to the faith, may be reviewed and examined de novo.” An example of this contrariety was furnished by the fourth and fifth councils, which differed in their interpretation of the same authors. The same thing happened in the case of two popes, about a proposition maintained by

certain monks of Scythia. Pope Hormisdas, understanding it in a bad sense, had condemned it; but Pope John II, his successor, upon re-examining the doctrine understood it in a good sense, approved it, and pronounced it to be orthodox. Would you say that for this reason one of these popes was a heretic? And must you not consequently acknowledge that, provided a person condemn the heretical sense which a pope may have ascribed to a book, he is no heretic because he declines condemning that book, while he understands it in a sense which it is certain the pope has not condemned? If this cannot be admitted, one of these popes must have fallen into error.

I have been anxious to familiarize you with these discrepancies among Catholics regarding questions of fact, which involve the understanding of the sense of a writer, showing you father against father, pope against pope, and council against council, to lead you from these to other examples of opposition, similar in their nature, but somewhat more disproportioned in respect of the parties concerned. For, in the instances I am now to adduce, you will see councils and popes ranged on one side, and Jesuits on the other; and yet you have never charged your brethren for this opposition even with presumption, much less with heresy.

You are well aware, father, that the writings of Origen were condemned by a great many popes and councils, and particularly by the fifth general council, as chargeable with certain heresies, and, among others, that of the reconciliation of the devils at the day of judgement. Do you suppose that, after this, it became absolutely imperative, as a test of Catholicism, to confess that Origen actually maintained these errors, and that it is not enough to condemn them, without attributing them to him? If this were true, what would become of your worthy Father Halloix, who has asserted the purity of Origen's faith, as well as many other Catholics who have attempted the same thing, such as Pico Mirandola, and Genebrard, doctor of the Sorbonne? Is it not, moreover, a certain fact, that the same fifth general council condemned the writings of Theodoret against St. Cyril, describing them as impious, "contrary to the true faith, and tainted with the

Nestorian heresy"? And yet this has not prevented Father Sirmond, a Jesuit, from defending him, or from saying, in his life of that father, that "his writings are entirely free from the heresy of Nestorius."

It is evident, therefore, that as the Church, in condemning a book, assumes that the error which she condemns is contained in that book, it is a point of faith to hold that error as condemned; but it is not a point of faith to hold that the book, in fact, contains the error which the Church supposes it does. Enough has been said, I think, to prove this; I shall, therefore, conclude my examples by referring to that of Pope Honorius, the history of which is so well known. At the commencement of the seventh century, the Church being troubled by the heresy of the Monothelites, that pope, with the view of terminating the controversy, passed a decree which seemed favourable to these heretics, at which many took offence. The affair, nevertheless, passed over without making much disturbance during his pontificate; but fifty years after, the Church being assembled in the sixth general council, in which Pope Agathon presided by his legates, this decree was impeached, and, after being read and examined, was condemned as containing the heresy of the Monothelites, and under that character burnt, in open court, along with the other writings of these heretics. Such was the respect paid to this decision, and such the unanimity with which it was received throughout the whole Church, that it was afterwards ratified by two other general councils, and likewise by two popes, Leo II and Adrian II, the latter of whom lived two hundred years after it had passed; and this universal and harmonious agreement remained undisturbed for seven or eight centuries. Of late years, however, some authors, and among the rest Cardinal Bellarmine, without seeming to dread the imputation of heresy, have stoutly maintained, against all this array of popes and councils, that the writings of Honorius are free from the error which had been ascribed to them; "because," says the cardinal, "general councils being liable to err in questions of fact, we have the best grounds for asserting the sixth council was mistaken with regard to the fact now under consideration; and that, misconceiving the sense of the Letters of Honorius, it has placed this pope most unjustly in the

rank of heretics." Observe, then, I pray you, father, that a man is not heretical for saying that Pope Honorius was not a heretic; even though a great many popes and councils, after examining his writings, should have declared that he was so.

I now come to the question before us, and shall allow you to state your case as favourably as you can. What will you then say, father, in order to stamp your opponents as heretics? That "Pope Innocent X has declared that the error of the five propositions is to be found in Jansenius?" I grant you that; what inference do you draw from it? That "it is heretical to deny that the error of the five propositions is to be found in Jansenius?" How so, father? Have we not here a question of fact exactly similar to the preceding examples? The Pope has declared that the error of the five propositions is contained in Jansenius, in the same way as his predecessors decided that the errors of the Nestorians and the Monothelites polluted the pages of Theodoret and Honorius. In the latter case, your writers hesitate not to say that, while they condemn the heresies, they do not allow that these authors actually maintained them; and, in like manner, your opponents now say that they condemn the five propositions, but cannot admit that Jansenius has taught them. Truly, the two cases are as like as they could well be; and, if there be any disparity between them, it is easy to see how far it must go in favour of the present question, by a comparison of many particular circumstances, which as they are self-evident, I do not specify. How comes it to pass, then, that when placed in precisely the same predicament, your friends are Catholics and your opponents heretics? On what strange principle of exception do you deprive the latter of a liberty which you freely award to all the rest of the faithful? What answer will you make to this, father? Will you say, "The pope has confirmed his constitution by a brief." To this I would reply, that two general councils and two popes confirmed the condemnation of the letters of Honorius. But what argument do you found upon the language of that brief, in which all that the Pope says is that "he has condemned the doctrine of Jansenius in these five propositions"? What does that add to the constitution, or what more can you infer from it? Nothing, certainly, except that as the sixth council condemned the doctrine of

Honorius, in the belief that it was the same with that of the Monothelites, so the Pope has said that he has condemned the doctrine of Jansenius in these five propositions, because he was led to suppose it was the same with that of the five propositions. And how could he do otherwise than suppose it? Your Society published nothing else; and you yourself, father, who have asserted that the said propositions were in that author "word for word," happened to be in Rome (for I know all your motions) at the time when the censure was passed. Was he to distrust the sincerity or the competence of so many grave ministers of religion? And how could he help being convinced of the fact, after the assurance which you had given him that the propositions were in that author "word for word"? It is evident, therefore, that in the event of its being found that Jansenius has not supported these doctrines, it would be wrong to say, as your writers have done in the cases before mentioned, that the Pope has deceived himself in this point of fact, which it is painful and offensive to publish at any time; the proper phrase is that you have deceived the Pope, which, as you are now pretty well known, will create no scandal.

Determined, however, to have a heresy made out, let it cost what it may, you have attempted, by the following manoeuvre, to shift the question from the point of fact, and make it bear upon a point of faith. "The Pope," say you, "declares that he has condemned the doctrine of Jansenius in these five propositions; therefore it is essential to the faith to hold that the doctrine of Jansenius touching these five propositions is heretical, let it be what it may." Here is a strange point of faith, that a doctrine is heretical be what it may. What! if Jansenius should happen to maintain that "we are capable of resisting internal grace" and that "it is false to say that Jesus Christ died for the elect only," would this doctrine be condemned just because it is his doctrine? Will the proposition, that "man has a freedom of will to do good or evil," be true when found in the Pope's constitution, and false when discovered in Jansenius? By what fatality must he be reduced to such a predicament, that truth, when admitted into his book, becomes heresy? You must confess, then, that he is only heretical on the supposition that he is friendly to the

errors condemned, seeing that the constitution of the Pope is the rule which we must apply to Jansenius, to judge if his character answer the description there given of him; and, accordingly, the question, “Is his doctrine heretical?” must be resolved by another question of fact, “Does it correspond to the natural sense of these propositions?” as it must necessarily be heretical if it does correspond to that sense, and must necessarily be orthodox if it be of an opposite character. For, in one word, since, according to the Pope and the bishops, “the propositions are condemned in their proper and natural sense,” they cannot possibly be condemned in the sense of Jansenius, except on the understanding that the sense of Jansenius is the same with the proper and natural sense of these propositions; and this I maintain to be purely a question of fact.

The question, then, still rests upon the point of fact, and cannot possibly be tortured into one affecting the faith. But though incapable of twisting it into a matter of heresy, you have it in your power to make it a pretext for persecution, and might, perhaps, succeed in this, were there not good reason to hope that nobody will be found so blindly devoted to your interests as to countenance such a disgraceful proceeding, or inclined to compel people, as you wish to do, to sign a declaration that they condemn these propositions in the sense of Jansenius, without explaining what the sense of Jansenius is. Few people are disposed to sign a blank confession of faith. Now this would really be to sign one of that description, leaving you to fill up the blank afterwards with whatsoever you pleased, as you would be at liberty to interpret according to your own taste the unexplained sense of Jansenius. Let it be explained, then, beforehand, otherwise we shall have, I fear, another version of your proximate power, without any sense at all- abstrahendo ab omni sensu. This mode of proceeding, you must be aware, does not take with the world. Men in general detest all ambiguity, especially in the matter of religion, where it is highly reasonable that one should know at least what one is asked to condemn. And how is it possible for doctors, who are persuaded that Jansenius can bear no other sense than that of efficacious grace, to consent to declare that they condemn his doctrine without explaining it, since,

with their present convictions, which no means are used to alter, this would be neither more nor less than to condemn efficacious grace, which cannot be condemned without sin? Would it not, therefore, be a piece of monstrous tyranny to place them in such an unhappy dilemma that they must either bring guilt upon their souls in the sight of God, by signing that condemnation against their consciences, or be denounced as heretics for refusing to sign it?

But there is a mystery under all this. You Jesuits cannot move a step without a stratagem. It remains for me to explain why you do not explain the sense of Jansenius. The sole purpose of my writing is to discover your designs, and, by discovering, to frustrate them. I must, therefore, inform those who are not already aware of the fact that your great concern in this dispute being to uphold the sufficient grace of your Molina, you could not effect this without destroying the efficacious grace which stands directly opposed to it. Perceiving, however, that the latter was now sanctioned at Rome and by all the learned in the Church, and unable to combat the doctrine on its own merits, you resolved to attack it in a clandestine way, under the name of the doctrine of Jansenius. You were resolved, accordingly, to get Jansenius condemned without explanation; and, to gain your purpose, gave out that his doctrine was not that of efficacious grace, so that every one might think he was at liberty to condemn the one without denying the other. Hence your efforts, in the present day, to impress this idea upon the minds of such as have no acquaintance with that author; an object which you yourself, father, have attempted, by means of the following ingenious syllogism: “The pope has condemned the doctrine of Jansenius; but the pope has not condemned efficacious grace: therefore, the doctrine of efficacious grace must be different from that of Jansenius.” If this mode of reasoning were conclusive, it might be demonstrated in the same way that Honorius and all his defenders are heretics of the same kind. “The sixth council has condemned the doctrine of Honorius; but the council has not condemned the doctrine of the Church: therefore the doctrine of Honorius is different from that of the Church; and therefore, all who defend him are heretics.” It is obvious that no conclusion can be drawn from this; for the Pope has done no

more than condemn the doctrine of the five propositions, which was represented to him as the doctrine of Jansenius.

But it matters not; you have no intention to make use of this logic for any length of time. Poor as it is, it will last sufficiently long to serve your present turn. All that you wish to effect by it, in the meantime, is to induce those who are unwilling to condemn efficacious grace to condemn Jansenius with less scruple. When this object has been accomplished, your argument will soon be forgotten, and their signatures, remaining as an eternal testimony in condemnation of Jansenius, will furnish you with an occasion to make a direct attack upon efficacious grace by another mode of reasoning much more solid than the former, which shall be forthcoming in proper time. "The doctrine of Jansenius," you will argue, "has been condemned by the universal subscriptions of the Church. Now this doctrine is manifestly that of efficacious grace" (and it will be easy for you to prove that); "therefore the doctrine of efficacious grace is condemned even by the confession of his defenders."

Behold your reason for proposing to sign the condemnation of a doctrine without giving an explanation of it! Behold the advantage you expect to gain from subscriptions thus procured! Should your opponents, however, refuse to subscribe, you have another trap laid for them. Having dexterously combined the question of faith with that of fact, and not allowing them to separate between them, nor to sign the one without the other, the consequence will be that, because they could not subscribe the two together, you will publish it in all directions that they have refused the two together. And thus though, in point of fact, they simply decline acknowledging that Jansenius has maintained the propositions which they condemn, which cannot be called heresy, you will boldly assert that they have refused to condemn the propositions themselves, and that it is this that constitutes their heresy.

Such is the fruit which you expect to reap from their refusal, and which will be no less useful to you than what you might have gained from their consent. So that, in the event of these signatures being exacted, they will fall into your snares,

whether they sign or not, and in both cases you will gain your point; such is your dexterity in uniformly putting matters into a train for your own advantage, whatever bias they may happen to take in their course!

How well I know you, father! and how grieved am I to see that God has abandoned you so far as to allow you such happy success in such an unhappy course! Your good fortune deserves commiseration, and can excite envy only in the breasts of those who know not what truly good fortune is. It is an act of charity to thwart the success you aim at in the whole of this proceeding, seeing that you can only reach it by the aid of falsehood, and by procuring credit to one of two lies either that the Church has condemned efficacious grace, or that those who defend that doctrine maintain the five condemned errors.

The world must, therefore, be apprised of two facts: first, That by your own confession, efficacious grace has not been condemned; and secondly, That nobody supports these errors. So that it may be known that those who refuse to sign what you are so anxious to exact from them, refuse merely in consideration of the question of fact, and that, being quite ready to subscribe that of faith, they cannot be deemed heretical on that account; because, to repeat it once more, though it be matter of faith to believe these propositions to be heretical, it will never be matter of faith to hold that they are to be found in the pages of Jansenius. They are innocent of all error; that is enough. It may be that they interpret Jansenius too favourably; but it may be also that you do not interpret him favourably enough. I do not enter upon this question. All that I know is that, according to your maxims, you believe that you may, without sin, publish him to be a heretic contrary to your own knowledge; whereas, according to their maxims, they cannot, without sin, declare him to be a Catholic, unless they are persuaded that he is one. They are, therefore, more honest than you, father; they have examined Jansenius more faithfully than you; they are no less intelligent than you; they are, therefore, no less credible witnesses than you. But come what may of this point of fact, they are certainly Catholics; for, in order to be so, it is not necessary to declare that

another man is not a Catholic; it is enough, in all conscience, if a person, without charging error upon anybody else, succeed in discharging himself.

Reverend Father, if you have found any difficulty in deciphering this letter, which is certainly not printed in the best possible type, blame nobody but yourself. Privileges are not so easily granted to me as they are to you. You can procure them even for the purpose of combating miracles; I cannot have them even to defend myself. The printing-houses are perpetually haunted. In such circumstances, you yourself would not advise me to write you any more letters, for it is really a sad annoyance to be obliged to have recourse to an Osnabruck impression.

LETTER XVIII. TO THE REVEREND FATHER ANNAT, JESUIT



MARCH 24, 1657

REVEREND FATHER,

Long have you laboured to discover some error in the creed or conduct of your opponents; but I rather think you will have to confess, in the end, that it is a more difficult task than you imagined to make heretics of people who, are not only no heretics, but who hate nothing in the world so much as heresy. In my last letter I succeeded in showing that you accuse them of one heresy after another, without being able to stand by one of the charges for any length of time; so that all that remained for you was to fix on their refusal to condemn "the sense of Jansenius," which you insist on their doing without explanation. You must have been sadly in want of heresies to brand them with, when you were reduced to this. For who ever heard of a heresy which nobody could explain? The answer was ready, therefore, that if Jansenius has no errors, it is wrong to condemn him; and if he has, you were bound to point them out, that we might know at least what we were condemning. This, however, you have never yet been pleased to do; but you have attempted to fortify your position by decrees, which made nothing in your favour, as they gave no sort of explanation of the sense of Jansenius, said to have been condemned in the five propositions. This was not the way to terminate the dispute. Had you mutually agreed as to the genuine sense of Jansenius, and had the only difference between you been as to whether that sense was heretical or not, in that case the decisions which might pronounce it to be heretical would have touched the real question in dispute. But the great dispute being about the sense of Jansenius, the one party saying that they could see nothing in it inconsistent with the sense of St. Augustine and St. Thomas, and the other party asserting that they saw in it an heretical sense which they would not express. It is

clear that a constitution which does not say a word about this difference of opinion, and which only condemns in general and without explanation the sense of Jansenius, leaves the point in dispute quite undecided.

You have accordingly been repeatedly told that as your discussion turns on a matter of fact, you would never be able to bring it to a conclusion without declaring what you understand by the sense of Jansenius. But, as you continued obstinate in your refusal to make this explanation, I endeavored, as a last resource, to extort it from you, by hinting in my last letter that there was some mystery under the efforts you were making to procure the condemnation of this sense without explaining it, and that your design was to make this indefinite censure recoil some day or other upon the doctrine of efficacious grace, by showing, as you could easily do, that this was exactly the doctrine of Jansenius. This has reduced you to the necessity of making a reply; for, had you pertinaciously refused, after such an insinuation, to explain your views of that sense, it would have been apparent to persons of the smallest penetration that you condemned it in the sense of efficacious grace- a conclusion which, considering the veneration in which the Church holds holy doctrine, would have overwhelmed you with disgrace.

You have, therefore, been forced to speak out your mind; and we find it expressed in your reply to that part of letter in which I remarked, that "if Jansenius was capable of any other sense than that of efficacious grace, he had no defenders; but if his writings bore no other sense, he had no errors to defend." You found it impossible to deny this position, father; but you have attempted to parry it by the following distinction: "It is not sufficient," say you, "for the vindication of Jansenius, to allege that he merely holds the doctrine of efficacious grace, for that may be held in two ways- the one heretical, according to Calvin, which consists in maintaining that the will, when under the influence of grace, has not the power of resisting it; the other orthodox, according to the Thomists and the Sorbonists, which is founded on the principles established by the councils, and

which is, that efficacious grace of itself governs the will in such a way that it still has the power of resisting it."

All this we grant, father; but you conclude by adding: "Jansenius would be orthodox, if he defended efficacious grace in the sense of the Thomists; but he is heretical, because he opposes the Thomists, and joins issue with Calvin, who denies the power of resisting grace." I do not here enter upon the question of fact, whether Jansenius really agrees with Calvin. It is enough for my purpose that you assert that he does, and that you now inform me that by the sense of Jansenius you have all along understood nothing more than the sense of Calvin. Was this all you meant, then, father? Was it only the error of Calvin that you were so anxious to get condemned, under the name of "the sense of Jansenius?" Why did you not tell us this sooner? You might have saved yourself a world of trouble; for we were all ready, without the aid of bulls or briefs, to join with you in condemning that error. What urgent necessity there was for such an explanation! What a host of difficulties has it removed! We were quite at a loss, my dear father, to know what error the popes and bishops meant to condemn, under the name of "the sense of Jansenius." The whole Church was in the utmost perplexity about it, and not a soul would relieve us by an explanation. This, however, has now been done by you, father- you, whom the whole of your party regard as the chief and prime mover of all their councils, and who are acquainted with the whole secret of this proceeding. You, then, have told us that the sense of Jansenius is neither more nor less than the sense of Calvin, which has been condemned by the council. Why, this explains everything. We know now that the error which they intended to condemn, under these terms- the sense of Jansenius- is neither more nor less than the sense of Calvin; and that, consequently, we, by joining with them in the condemnation of Calvin's doctrine, have yielded all due obedience to these decrees. We are no longer surprised at the zeal which the popes and some bishops manifested against "the sense of Jansenius." How, indeed, could they be otherwise than zealous against it, believing, as they did, the declarations of those who publicly affirmed that it was identically the same with that of Calvin?

I must maintain, then, father, that you have no further reason to quarrel with your adversaries; for they detest that doctrine as heartily as you do. I am only astonished to see that you are ignorant of this fact, and that you have such an imperfect acquaintance with their sentiments on this point, which they have so repeatedly expressed in their published works. I flatter myself that, were you more intimate with these writings, you would deeply regret your not having made yourself acquainted sooner, in the spirit of peace, with a doctrine which is in every respect so holy and so Christian, but which passion, in the absence of knowledge, now prompts you to oppose. You would find, father, that they not only hold that an effective resistance may be made to those feebler graces which go under the name of exciting or inefficacious, from their not terminating in the good with which they inspire us; but that they are, moreover, as firm in maintaining, in opposition to Calvin, the power which the will has to resist even efficacious and victorious grace, as they are in contending against Molina for the power of this grace over the will, and fully as jealous for the one of these truths as they are for the other. They know too well that man, of his own nature, has always the power of sinning and of resisting grace; and that, since he became corrupt, he unhappily carries in his breast a fount of concupiscence which infinitely augments that power; but that, notwithstanding this, when it pleases God to visit him with His mercy, He makes the soul do what He wills, and in the manner He wills it to be done, while, at the same time, the infallibility of the divine operation does not in any way destroy the natural liberty of man, in consequence of the secret and wonderful ways by which God operates this change. This has been most admirably explained by St. Augustine, in such a way as to dissipate all those imaginary inconsistencies which the opponents of efficacious grace suppose to exist between the sovereign power of grace over the free-will and the power which the free-will has to resist grace. For, according to this great saint, whom the popes and the Church have held to be a standard authority on this subject, God transforms the heart of man, by shedding abroad in it a heavenly sweetness, which surmounting the delights of the flesh, and inducing him to feel, on the one

hand, his own mortality and nothingness, and to discover, on the other hand, the majesty and eternity of God, makes him conceive a distaste for the pleasures of sin which interpose between him and incorruptible happiness. Finding his chiefest joy in the God who charms him, his soul is drawn towards Him infallibly, but of its own accord, by a motion perfectly free, spontaneous, love-impelled; so that it would be its torment and punishment to be separated from Him. Not but that the person has always the power of forsaking his God, and that he may not actually forsake Him, provided he choose to do it. But how could he choose such a course, seeing that the will always inclines to that which is most agreeable to it, and that, in the case we now suppose, nothing can be more agreeable than the possession of that one good, which comprises in itself all other good things? "Quod enim (says St. Augustine) amplius nos delectat, secundum operemur necesse est- Our actions are necessarily determined by that which affords us the greatest pleasure."

Such is the manner in which God regulates the free will of man without encroaching on its freedom, and in which the free will, which always may, but never will, resist His grace, turns to God with a movement as voluntary as it is irresistible, whensoever He is pleased to draw it to Himself by the sweet constraint of His efficacious inspirations.

These, father, are the divine principles of St. Augustine and St. Thomas, according to which it is equally true that we have the power of resisting grace, contrary to Calvin's opinion, and that, nevertheless, to employ the language of Pope Clement VIII in his paper addressed to the Congregation de Auxiliis, "God forms within us the motion of our will, and effectually disposes of our hearts, by virtue of that empire which His supreme majesty has over the volitions of men, as well as over the other creatures under heaven, according to St. Augustine."

On the same principle, it follows that we act of ourselves, and thus, in opposition to another error of Calvin, that we have merits which are truly and properly ours; and yet, as God is the first principle of our actions, and as, in the language of St. Paul, He "worketh in us that which is pleasing in his sight"; "our merits are the gifts of God," as the Council of Trent says.

By means of this distinction we demolish the profane sentiment of Luther, condemned by that Council, namely, that "we co-operate in no way whatever towards our salvation any more than inanimate things"; and, by the same mode of reasoning, we overthrow the equally profane sentiment of the school of Molina, who will not allow that it is by the strength of divine grace that we are enabled to cooperate with it in the work of our salvation, and who thereby comes into hostile collision with that principle of faith established by St. Paul: "That it is God who worketh in us both to will and to do."

In fine, in this way we reconcile all those passages of Scripture which seem quite inconsistent with each other such as the following: "Turn ye unto God"- "Turn thou us, and we shall be turned"- "Cast away iniquity from you"- "It is God who taketh away iniquity from His people"- "Bring forth works meet for repentance"- "Lord, thou hast wrought all our works in us"- "Make ye a new heart and a new spirit"- "A new spirit will I give you, and a new heart will I create within you," &c.

The only way of reconciling these apparent contrarieties, which ascribe our good actions at one time to God and at another time to ourselves, is to keep in view the distinction, as stated by St. Augustine, that "our actions are ours in respect of the free will which produces them; but that they are also of God, in respect of His grace which enables our free will to produce them"; and that, as the same writer elsewhere remarks, "God enables us to do what is pleasing in his sight, by making us will to do even what we might have been unwilling to do."

It thus appears, father, that your opponents are perfectly at one with the modern Thomists, for the Thomists hold with them both the power of resisting grace, and the infallibility of the effect of grace; of which latter doctrine they profess themselves the most strenuous advocates, if we may judge from a common maxim of their theology, which Alvarez, one of the leading men among them, repeats so often in his book, and expresses in the following terms (dis, n. 4): "When efficacious grace moves the free will, it infallibly consents; because the effect of grace is such, that, although the will has the power of withholding its

consent, it nevertheless consents in effect." He corroborates this by a quotation from his master, St. Thomas: "The will of God cannot fail to be accomplished; and, accordingly, when it is his pleasure that a man should consent to the influence of grace, he consents infallibly, and even necessarily, not by an absolute necessity, but by a necessity of infallibility." In effecting this, divine grace does not trench upon "the power which man has to resist it, if he wishes to do so"; it merely prevents him from wishing to resist it. This has been acknowledged by your Father Petau, in the following passage (Book i, p.602):. "The grace of Jesus Christ insures infallible perseverance in piety, though not by necessity; for a person may refuse to yield his consent to grace, if he be so inclined, as the council states; but that same grace provides that he shall never be so inclined."

This, father, is the uniform doctrine of St. Augustine, of St. Prosper, of the fathers who followed them, of the councils, of St. Thomas, and of all the Thomists in general. It is likewise, whatever you may think of it, the doctrine of your opponents. And, let me add, it is the doctrine which you yourself have lately sealed with your approbation. I shall quote your own words: "The doctrine of efficacious grace, which admits that we have a power of resisting it, is orthodox, founded on the councils, and supported by the Thomists and Sorbonists." Now, tell us the plain truth, father; if you had known that your opponents really held this doctrine, the interests of your Society might perhaps have made you scruple before pronouncing this public approval of it; but, acting on the supposition that they were hostile to the doctrine, the same powerful motive has induced you to authorize sentiments which you know in your heart to be contrary to those of your Society; and by this blunder, in your anxiety to ruin their principles, you have yourself completely confirmed them. So that, by a kind of prodigy, we now behold the advocates of efficacious grace vindicated by the advocates of Molina- an admirable instance of the wisdom of God in making all things concur to advance the glory of the truth.

Let the whole world observe, then, that, by your own admission, the truth of this efficacious grace, which is so essential to all the acts of piety, which is so

dear to the Church, and which is the purchase of her Saviour's blood, is so indisputably Catholic that there is not a single Catholic, not even among the Jesuits, who would not acknowledge its orthodoxy. And let it be noticed, at the same time, that, according to your own confession, not the slightest suspicion of error can fall on those whom you have so often stigmatized with it. For so long as you charged them with clandestine heresies, without choosing to specify them by name, it was as difficult for them to defend themselves as it was easy for you to bring such accusations. But now, when you have come to declare that the error which constrains you to oppose them, is the heresy of Calvin which you supposed them to hold, it must be apparent to every one that they are innocent of all error; for so decidedly hostile are they to this, the only error you charge upon them, that they protest, by their discourses, by their books, by every mode, in short, in which they can testify their sentiments, that they condemn that heresy with their whole heart, and in the same manner as it has been condemned by the Thomists, whom you acknowledge, without scruple, to be Catholics, and who have never been suspected to be anything else.

What will you say against them now, father? Will you say that they are heretics still, because, although they do not adopt the sense of Calvin, they will not allow that the sense of Jansenius is the same with that of Calvin? Will you presume to say that this is matter of heresy? Is it not a pure question of fact, with which heresy has nothing to do? It would be heretical to say that we have not the power, of resisting efficacious grace; but would it be so to doubt that Jansenius held that doctrine? Is this a revealed truth? Is it an article of faith which must be believed, on pain of damnation? Or is it not, in spite of you, a point of fact, on account of which it would be ridiculous to hold that there were heretics in the Church?

Drop this epithet, then, father, and give them some other name, more suited to the nature of your dispute. Tell them, they are ignorant and stupid- that they misunderstand Jansenius. These would be charges in keeping with your controversy; but it is quite irrelevant to call them heretics. As this, however, is the only charge from which I am anxious to defend them, I shall not give myself

much trouble to show that they rightly understand Jansenius. All I shall say on the point, father, is that it appears to me that, were he to be judged according to your own rules, it would be difficult to prove him not to be a good Catholic. We shall try him by the test you have proposed. “To know,” say you, “whether Jansenius is sound or not, we must inquire whether he defends efficacious grace in the manner of Calvin, who denies that man has the power of resisting it- in which case he would be heretical; or in the manner of the Thomists, who admit that it may be resisted- for then he would be Catholic.” judge, then, father, whether he holds that grace may be resisted when he says: “That we have always a power to resist grace, according to the council; that free will may always act or not act, will or not will, consent or not consent, do good or do evil; and that man, in this life, has always these two liberties, which may be called by some contradictions.” Judge. likewise, if he be not opposed to the error of Calvin, as you have described it, when he occupies a whole chapter (21st) in showing “that the Church has condemned that heretic who denies that efficacious grace acts on the free will in the manner which has been so long believed in the Church, so as to leave it in the power of free will to consent or not to consent; whereas, according to St. Augustine and the council, we have always the power of withholding our consent if we choose; and according to St. Prosper, God bestows even upon his elect the will to persevere, in such a way as not to deprive them of the power to will the contrary.” And, in one word, judge if he does not agree with the Thomists, from the following declaration in chapter 4th: “That all that the Thomists have written with the view of reconciling the efficaciousness of grace with the power of resisting it, so entirely coincides with his judgement that to ascertain his sentiments on this subject we have only to consult their writings.”

Such being the language he holds on these heads my opinion is that he believes in the power of resisting grace; that he differs from Calvin and agrees with the Thomists, because he has said so; and that he is, therefore, according to your own showing, a Catholic. If you have any means of knowing the sense of an author otherwise than by his expressions; and if, without quoting any of his passages,

you are disposed to maintain, in direct opposition to his own words, that he denies this power of resistance, and that he is for Calvin and against the Thomists, do not be afraid, father, that I will accuse you of heresy for that. I shall only say that you do not seem properly to understand Jansenius; but we shall not be the less on that account children of the same Church.

How comes it, then, father, that you manage this dispute in such a passionate spirit, and that you treat as your most cruel enemies, and as the most pestilent of heretics, a class of persons whom you cannot accuse of any error, nor of anything whatever, except that they do not understand Jansenius as you do? For what else in the world do you dispute about, except the sense of that author? You would have them to condemn it. They ask what you mean them to condemn. You reply that you mean the error of Calvin. They rejoin that they condemn that error; and with this acknowledgement (unless it is syllables you wish to condemn, and not the thing which they signify), you ought to rest satisfied. If they refuse to say that they condemn the sense of Jansenius, it is because they believe it to be that of St. Thomas, and thus this unhappy phrase has a very equivocal meaning betwixt you. In your mouth it signifies the sense of Calvin; in theirs the sense of St. Thomas. Your dissensions arise entirely from the different ideas which you attach to the same term. Were I made umpire in the quarrel, I would interdict the use of the word Jansenius, on both sides; and thus, by obliging you merely to express what you understand by it, it would be seen that you ask nothing more than the condemnation of Calvin, to which they willingly agree; and that they ask nothing more than the vindication of the sense of St. Augustine and St. Thomas, in which you again perfectly coincide.

I declare, then, father, that for my part I shall continue to regard them as good Catholics, whether they condemn Jansenius, on finding him erroneous, or refuse to condemn him, from finding that he maintains nothing more than what you yourself acknowledge to be orthodox; and that I shall say to them what St. Jerome said to John, bishop of Jerusalem, who was accused of holding the eight propositions of Origen: “Either condemn Origen, if you acknowledge that he has

maintained these errors, or else deny that he has maintained them- Aut nega hoc dixisse eum qui arguitur; aut si locutus est talia, eum damna qui dixerit."

See, father, how these persons acted, whose sole concern was with principles, and not with persons; whereas you who aim at persons more than principles, consider it a matter of no consequence to condemn errors, unless you procure the condemnation of the individuals to whom you choose to impute them.

How ridiculously violent your conduct is, father! and how ill calculated to insure success! I told you before, and I repeat it, violence and verity can make no impression on each other. Never were your accusations more outrageous, and never was the innocence of your opponents more discernible: never has efficacious grace been attacked with greater subtility, and never has it been more triumphantly established. You have made the most desperate efforts to convince people that your disputes involved points of faith; and never was it more apparent that the whole controversy turned upon a mere point of fact. In fine, you have moved heaven and earth to make it appear that this point of fact is founded on truth; and never were people more disposed to call it in question. And the obvious reason of this is that you do not take the natural course to make them believe a point of fact, which is to convince their senses and point out to them in a book the words which you allege are to be found in it. The means you have adopted are so far removed from this straightforward course that the most obtuse minds are unavoidably struck by observing it. Why did you not take the plan which I followed in bringing to light the wicked maxims of your authors- which was to cite faithfully the passages of their writings from which they were extracted? This was the mode followed by the cures of Paris, and it never fails to produce conviction. But, when you were charged by them with holding, for example, the proposition of Father Lamy, that a "monk may kill a person who threatens to publish calumnies against himself or his order, when he cannot otherwise prevent the publication," what would you have thought, and what would the public have said, if they had not quoted the place where that sentiment is literally to be found? or if, after having been repeatedly demanded to quote their authority, they still

obstinately refused to do it? or if, instead of acceding to this, they had gone off to Rome and procured a bull, ordaining all men to acknowledge the truth of their statement? Would it not be undoubtedly concluded that they had surprised the Pope, and that they would never have had recourse to this extraordinary method, but for want of the natural means of substantiating the truth, which matters of fact furnish to all who undertake to prove them? Accordingly, they had no more to do than to tell us that Father Lamy teaches this doctrine in Book 5, disp.36, n.118, page 544. of the Douay edition; and by this means everybody who wished to see it found it out, and nobody could doubt about it any longer. This appears to be a very easy and prompt way of putting an end to controversies of fact, when one has got the right side of the question.

How comes it, then, father, that you do not follow this plan? You said, in your book, that the five propositions are in Jansenius, word for word, in the identical terms- iisdem verbis. You were told they were not. What had you to do after this, but either to cite the page, if you had really found the words, or to acknowledge that you were mistaken. But you have done neither the one nor the other. In place of this, on finding that all the passages from Jansenius, which you sometimes adduce for the purpose of hoodwinking the people, are not "the condemned propositions in their individual identity," as you had engaged to show us, you present us with Constitutions from Rome, which, without specifying any particular place, declare that the propositions have been extracted from his book.

I am sensible, father, of the respect which Christians owe to the Holy See, and your antagonists give sufficient evidence of their resolution ever to abide by its decisions. Do not imagine that it implied any deficiency in this due deference on their part that they represented to the pope, with all the submission which children owe to their father, and members to their head, that it was possible he might be deceived on this point of fact- that he had not caused it to be investigated during his pontificate; and that his predecessor, Innocent X, had merely examined into the heretical character of the propositions, and not into the fact of their connection with Jansenius. This they stated to the commissary of the Holy Office, one of the

principal examiners, stating that they could not be censured according to the sense of any author, because they had been presented for examination on their own merits; and without considering to what author they might belong: further, that upwards of sixty doctors, and a vast number of other persons of learning and piety, had read that book carefully over, without ever having encountered the proscribed propositions, and that they have found some of a quite opposite description: that those who had produced that impression on the mind of the Pope might be reasonably presumed to have abused the confidence he reposed in them, inasmuch as they had an interest in decrying that author, who has convicted Molina of upwards of fifty errors: that what renders this supposition still more probable is that they have a certain maxim among them, one of the best authenticated in their whole system of theology, which is, "that they may, without criminality, calumniate those by whom they conceive themselves to be unjustly attacked"; and that, accordingly, their testimony being so suspicious, and the testimony of the other party so respectable, they had some ground for supplicating his holiness, with the most profound humility, that he would ordain an investigation to be made into this fact, in the presence of doctors belonging to both parties, in order that a solemn and regular decision might be formed on the point in dispute. "Let there be a convocation of able judges (says St. Basil on a similar occasion, Epistle 75); let each of them be left at perfect freedom; let them examine my writings; let them judge if they contain errors against the faith; let them read the objections and the replies; that so a judgement may be given in due form and with proper knowledge of the case, and not a defamatory libel without examination."

It is quite vain for you, father, to represent those who would act in the manner I have now supposed as deficient in proper subjection to the Holy See. The popes are very far from being disposed to treat Christians with that imperiousness which some would fain exercise under their name. "The Church," says Pope St. Gregory, "which has been trained in the school of humility, does not command with authority, but persuades by reason, her children whom she believes to be in error,

to obey what she has taught them." And so far from deeming it a disgrace to review a judgement into which they may have been surprised, we have the testimony of St. Bernard for saying that they glory in acknowledging the mistake. "The Apostolic See (he says, Epistle 180) can boast of this recommendation, that it never stands on the point of honour, but willingly revokes a decision that has been gained from it by surprise; indeed, it is highly just to prevent any from profiting by an act of injustice, and more especially before the Holy See."

Such, father, are the proper sentiments with which the popes ought to be inspired; for all divines are agreed that they may be surprised, and that their supreme character, so far from warranting them against mistakes, exposes them the more readily to fall into them, on account of the vast number of cares which claim their attention. This is what the same St. Gregory says to some persons who were astonished at the circumstance of another pope having suffered himself to be deluded: "Why do you wonder," says he, "that we should be deceived, we who are but men? Have you not read that David, a king who had the spirit of prophecy, was induced, by giving credit to the falsehoods of Ziba, to pronounce an unjust judgement against the son of Jonathan? Who will think it strange, then, that we, who are not prophets, should sometimes be imposed upon by deceivers? A multiplicity of affairs presses on us, and our minds, which, by being obliged to attend to so many things at once, apply themselves less closely to each in particular, are the more easily liable to be imposed upon in individual cases." Truly, father, I should suppose that the popes know better than you whether they may be deceived or not. They themselves tell us that popes, as well as the greatest princes, are more exposed to deception than individuals who are less occupied with important avocations. This must be believed on their testimony. And it is easy to imagine by what means they come to be thus overreached. St. Bernard, in the letter which he wrote to Innocent II, gives us the following description of the process: "It is no wonder, and no novelty, that the human mind may be deceived, and is deceived. You are surrounded by monks who come to you in the spirit of lying and deceit. They have filled your ears with stories against a bishop, whose

life has been most exemplary, but who is the object of their hatred. These persons bite like dogs, and strive to make good appear evil. Meanwhile, most holy father, you put yourself into a rage against your own son. Why have you afforded matter of joy to his enemies? Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God. I trust that, when you have ascertained the truth, all this delusion, which rests on a false report, will be dissipated. I pray the spirit of truth to grant you the grace to separate light from darkness, and to favour the good by rejecting the evil." You see, then, father, that the eminent rank of the popes does not exempt them from the influence of delusion; and I may now add, that it only serves to render their mistakes more dangerous and important than those of other men. This is the light in which St. Bernard represents them to Pope Eugenius: "There is another fault, so common among the great of this world that I never met one of them who was free from it; and that is, holy father, an excessive credulity, the source of numerous disorders. From this proceed violent persecutions against the innocent, unfounded prejudices against the absent, and tremendous storms about nothing (pro nihilo). This, holy father, is a universal evil, from the influence of which, if you are exempt, I shall only say you are the only individual among all your compeers who can boast of that privilege."

I imagine, father, that the proofs I have brought are beginning to convince you that the popes are liable to be surprised. But, to complete your conversion, I shall merely remind you of some examples, which you yourself have quoted in your book, of popes and emperors whom heretics have actually deceived. You will remember, then, that you have told us that Apollinarius surprised Pope Damasius, in the same way that Celestius surprised Zozimus. You inform us, besides, that one called Athanasius deceived the Emperor Heraclius, and prevailed on him to persecute the Catholics. And lastly, that Sergius obtained from Honorius that infamous decretal which was burned at the sixth council, "by playing the busybody," as you say, "about the person of that pope."

It appears, then, father, by your own confession, that those who act this part about the persons of kings and popes do sometimes artfully entice them to

persecute the faithful defenders of the truth, under the persuasion that they are persecuting heretics. And hence the popes, who hold nothing in greater horror than these surprisals, have, by a letter of Alexander III, enacted an ecclesiastical statute, which is inserted in the canonical law, to permit the suspension of the execution of their bulls and decretals, when there is ground to suspect that they have been imposed upon. “If,” says that pope to the Archbishop of Ravenna, “we sometimes send decretals to your fraternity which are opposed to your sentiments, give yourselves no distress on that account. We shall expect you eitherto carry them respectfully into execution, or to send us the reason why you conceive they ought not to be executed; for we deem it right that you should not execute a decree which may have been procured from us by artifice and surprise.” Such has been the course pursued by the popes, whose sole object is to settle the disputes of Christians, and not to follow the passionate counsels of those who strive to involve them in trouble and perplexity. Following the advice of St. Peter and St. Paul, who in this followed the commandment of Jesus Christ, they avoid domination. The spirit which appears in their whole conduct is that of peace and truth. In this spirit they ordinarily insert in their letters this clause, which is tacitly understood in them all: “Si ita est; si preces veritate nitantur- If it be so as we have heard it; if the facts be true.” It is quite clear, if the popes themselves give no force to their bulls, except in so far as they are founded on genuine facts, that it is not the bulls alone that prove the truth of the facts, but that, on the contrary, even according to the canonists, it is the truth of the facts which renders the bulls lawfully admissible.

In what way, then, are we to learn the truth of facts? It must be by the eyes, father, which are the legitimate judges of such matters, as reason is the proper judge of things natural and intelligible, and faith of things supernatural and revealed. For, since you will force me into this discussion, you must allow me to tell you that, according to the sentiments of the two greatest doctors of the Church, St. Augustine and St. Thomas, these three principles of our knowledge, the senses, reason, and faith, have each their separate objects and their own

degrees of certainty. And as God has been pleased to employ the intervention of the senses to give entrance to faith (for “faith cometh by hearing”), it follows, that so far from faith destroying the certainty of the senses, to call in question the faithful report of the senses would lead to the destruction of faith. It is on this principle that St. Thomas explicitly states that God has been pleased that the sensible accidents should subsist in the eucharist, in order that the senses, which judge only of these accidents, might not be deceived.

We conclude, therefore, from this, that whatever the proposition may be that is submitted to our examination, we must first determine its nature, to ascertain to which of those three principles it ought to be referred. If it relate to a supernatural truth, we must judge of it neither by the senses nor by reason, but by Scripture and the decisions of the Church. Should it concern an unrevealed truth and something within the reach of natural reason, reason must be its proper judge. And if it embrace a point of fact, we must yield to the testimony of the senses, to which it naturally belongs to take cognizance of such matters.

So general is this rule that, according to St. Augustine and St. Thomas, when we meet with a passage even in the Scripture, the literal meaning of which, at first sight, appears contrary to what the senses or reason are certainly persuaded of, we must not attempt to reject their testimony in this case, and yield them up to the authority of that apparent sense of the Scripture, but we must interpret the Scripture, and seek out therein another sense agreeable to that sensible truth; because, the Word of God being infallible in the facts which it records, and the information of the senses and of reason, acting in their sphere, being certain also, it follows that there must be an agreement between these two sources of knowledge. And as Scripture may be interpreted in different ways, whereas the testimony of the senses is uniform, we must in these matters adopt as the true interpretation of Scripture that view which corresponds with the faithful report of the senses. “Two things,” says St. Thomas, “must be observed, according to the doctrine of St. Augustine: first, That Scripture has always one true sense; and secondly, That as it may receive various senses, when we have discovered one

which reason plainly teaches to be false, we must not persist in maintaining that this is the natural sense, but search out another with which reason will agree.

St. Thomas explains his meaning by the example of a passage in Genesis where it is written that "God created two great lights, the sun and the moon, and also the stars," in which the Scriptures appear to say that the moon is greater than all the stars; but as it is evident, from unquestionable demonstration, that this is false, it is not our duty, says that saint, obstinately to defend the literal sense of that passage; another meaning must be sought, consistent with the truth of the fact, such as the following, "That the phrase great light, as applied to the moon, denotes the greatness of that luminary merely as it appears in our eyes, and not the magnitude of its body considered in itself."

An opposite mode of treatment, so far from procuring respect to the Scripture, would only expose it to the contempt of infidels; because, as St. Augustine says, "when they found that we believed, on the authority of Scripture, in things which they assuredly knew to be false, they would laugh at our credulity with regard to its more recondite truths, such as the resurrection of the dead and eternal life." "And by this means," adds St. Thomas, "we should render our religion contemptible in their eyes, and shut up its entrance into their minds.

And let me add, father, that it would in the same manner be the likeliest means to shut up the entrance of Scripture into the minds of heretics, and to render the pope's authority contemptible in their eyes, to refuse all those the name of Catholics who would not believe that certain words were in a certain book, where they are not to be found, merely because a pope by mistake has declared that they are. It is only by examining a book that we can ascertain what words it contains. Matters of fact can only be proved by the senses. If the position which you maintain be true, show it, or else ask no man to believe it- that would be to no purpose. Not all the powers on earth can, by the force of authority, persuade us of a point of fact, any more than they can alter it; for nothing can make that to be not which really is.

It was to no purpose, for example, that the monks of Ratisbon procured from Pope St. Leo IX a solemn decree, by which he declared that the body of St. Denis, the first bishop of Paris, who is generally held to have been the Areopagite, had been transported out of France and conveyed into the chapel of their monastery. It is not the less true, for all this, that the body of that saint always lay, and lies to this hour, in the celebrated abbey which bears his name, and within the walls of which you would find it no easy matter to obtain a cordial reception to this bull, although the pope has therein assured us that he has examined the affair "with all possible diligence (diligentissime), and with the advice of many bishops and prelates; so that he strictly enjoins all the French (districte praecipientes) to own and confess that these holy relics are no longer in their country." The French, however, who knew that fact to be untrue, by the evidence of their own eyes, and who, upon opening the shrine, found all those relics entire, as the historians of that period inform us, believed then, as they have always believed since, the reverse of what that holy pope had enjoined them to believe, well knowing that even saints and prophets are liable to be imposed upon.

It was to equally little purpose that you obtained against Galileo a decree from Rome condemning his opinion respecting the motion of the earth. It will never be proved by such an argument as this that the earth remains stationary; and if it can be demonstrated by sure observation that it is the earth and not the sun that revolves, the efforts and arguments of all mankind put together will not hinder our planet from revolving, nor hinder themselves from revolving along with her.

Again, you must not imagine that the letters of Pope Zachary, excommunicating St. Virgilius for maintaining the existence of the antipodes, have annihilated the New World; nor must you suppose that, although he declared that opinion to be a most dangerous heresy, the King of Spain was wrong in giving more credence to Christopher Columbus, who came from the place, than to the judgement of the pope, who had never been there, or that the Church has not derived a vast benefit from the discovery, inasmuch as it has brought the

knowledge of the Gospel to a great multitude of souls who might otherwise have perished in their infidelity.

You see, then, father, what is the nature of matters of fact, and on what principles they are to be determined; from all which, to recur to our subject, it is easy to conclude that, if the five propositions are not in Jansenius, it is impossible that they can have been extracted from him; and that the only way to form a judgement on the matter, and to produce universal conviction, is to examine that book in a regular conference, as you have been desired to do long ago. Until that be done, you have no right to charge your opponents with contumacy; for they are as blameless in regard to the point of fact as they are of errors in point of faith-Catholics in doctrine, reasonable in fact, and innocent in both.

Who can help feeling astonishment, then, father, to see on the one side a vindication so complete, and on the other accusations so outrageous! Who would suppose that the only question between you relates to a single fact of no importance, which the one party wishes the other to believe without showing it to them! And who would ever imagine that such a noise should have been made in the Church for nothing (pro nihilo), as good St. Bernard says! But this is just one of the principal tricks of your policy, to make people believe that everything is at stake, when, in reality, there is nothing at stake; and to represent to those influential persons who listen to you that the most pernicious errors of Calvin, and the most vital principles of the faith, are involved in your disputes, with the view of inducing them, under this conviction, to employ all their zeal and all their authority against your opponents, as if the safety of the Catholic religion depended upon it; Whereas, if they came to know that the whole dispute was about this paltry point of fact, they would give themselves no concern about it, but would, on the contrary, regret extremely that, to gratify your private passions, they had made such exertions in an affair of no consequence to the Church. For, in fine, to take the worst view of the matter, even though it should be true that Jansenius maintained these propositions, what great misfortune would accrue from some persons doubting of the fact, provided they detested the propositions,

as they have publicly declared that they do? Is it not enough that they are condemned by everybody, without exception, and that, too, in the sense in which you have explained that you wish them to be condemned? Would they be more severely censured by saying that Jansenius maintained them? What purpose, then, would be served by exacting this acknowledgment, except that of disgracing a doctor and bishop, who died in the communion of the Church? I cannot see how that should be accounted so great a blessing as to deserve to be purchased at the expense of so many disturbances. What interest has the state, or the pope, or bishops, or doctors, or the Church at large, in this conclusion? It does not affect them in any way whatever, father; it can affect none but your Society, which would certainly enjoy some pleasure from the defamation of an author who has done you some little injury. Meanwhile everything is in confusion, because you have made people believe that everything is in danger. This is the secret spring giving impulse to all those mighty commotions, which would cease immediately were the real state of the controversy once known. And therefore, as the peace of the Church depended on this explanation, it was, I conceive, of the utmost importance that it should be given that, by exposing all your disguises, it might be manifest to the whole world that your accusations were without foundation, your opponents without error, and the Church without heresy.

Such, father, is the end which it has been my desire to accomplish; an end which appears to me, in every point of view, so deeply important to religion that I am at a loss to conceive how those to whom you furnish so much occasion for speaking can contrive to remain in silence. Granting that they are not affected with the personal wrongs which you have committed against them, those which the Church suffers ought, in my opinion, to have forced them to complain. Besides, I am not altogether sure if ecclesiastics ought to make a sacrifice of their reputation to calumny, especially in the matter of religion. They allow, you, nevertheless, to say whatever you please; so that, had it not been for the opportunity which, by mere accident, you afforded me of taking their part, the scandalous impressions which you are circulating against them in all quarters

would, in all probability, have gone forth without contradiction. Their patience, I confess, astonishes me; and the more so that I cannot suspect it of proceeding either from timidity or from incapacity, being well assured that they want neither arguments for their own vindication, nor zeal for the truth. And yet I see them religiously bent on silence, to a degree which appears to me altogether unjustifiable. For my part, father, I do not believe that I can possibly follow their example. Leave the Church in peace, and I shall leave you as you are, with all my heart; but so long as you make it your sole business to keep her in confusion, doubt not but that there shall always be found within her bosom children of peace who will consider themselves bound to employ all their endeavours to preserve her tranquillity.

LETTER XIX. FRAGMENT OF A NINETEENTH PROVINCIAL LETTER, ADDRESSED TO FATHER ANNAT



REVEREND SIR,

If I have caused you some dissatisfaction, in former Letters, by my endeavours to establish the innocence of those whom you were labouring to asperse, I shall afford you pleasure in the present by making you acquainted with the sufferings which you have inflicted upon them. Be comforted, my good father, the objects of your enmity are in distress! And if the Reverend the Bishops should be induced to carry out, in their respective dioceses, the advice you have given them, to cause to be subscribed and sworn a certain matter of fact, which is, in itself, not credible, and which it cannot be obligatory upon any one to believe- you will indeed succeed in plunging your opponents to the depth of sorrow, at witnessing the Church brought into so abject a condition.

Yes, sir, I have seen them; and it was with a satisfaction inexpressible! I have seen these holy men; and this was the attitude in which they were found. They were not wrapt up in a philosophic magnanimity; they did not affect to exhibit that indiscriminate firmness which urges implicit obedience to every momentary impulsive duty; nor yet were they in a frame of weakness and timidity, which would prevent them from either discerning the truth, or following it when discerned. But I found them with minds pious, composed, and unshaken; impressed with a meek deference for ecclesiastical authority; with tenderness of spirit, zeal for truth, and a desire to ascertain and obey her dictates: filled with a salutary suspicion of themselves, distrusting their own infirmity, and regretting that it should be thus exposed to trial; yet withal, sustained by a modest hope that their Lord will deign to instruct them by his illuminations, and sustain them by his power; and believing that that of their Saviour, whose sacred influences it is their

endeavour to maintain, and for whose cause they are brought into suffering, will be at once their guide and their support! I have, in fine, seen them maintaining a character of Christian piety, whose power . . . .

I found them surrounded by their friends, who had hastened to impart those counsels which they deemed the most fitting in their present exigency. I have heard those counsels; I have observed the manner in which they were received, and the answers given: and truly, my father, had you yourself been present, I think you would have acknowledged that, in their whole procedure, there was the entire absence of a spirit of insubordination and schism; and that their only desire and aim was to preserve inviolate two things- to them infinitely precious- peace and truth.

For, after due representations had been made to them of the penalties they would draw upon themselves by their refusal to sign the Constitution, and the scandal it might cause in the Church, their reply was . . . .

THE END OF THE PROVINCIAL LETTERS

On the Geometrical Spirit (1658)



Translated by Orlando Williams Wight, 1859

Pascal's major contribution to the philosophy of mathematics came with his *De l'Esprit géométrique*, which was originally written as a preface to a geometry textbook for one of the famous "Petites-Écoles de Port-Royal" (Little Schools of Port-Royal). Pascal wrote the essay at the tender age of 16, though it remained unpublished until over a century after his death. It explores the issue of discovering truths, arguing that the ideal of such a method would be to found all propositions on already established truths. At the same time, he claims that this is impossible, as such established truths would require other truths to back them up — therefore, first principles cannot be reached. Based on this argument, Pascal suggests that the procedure used in geometry is as perfect as possible, with certain principles assumed and other propositions developed from them. However, he stresses that there is no way to know that the assumed principles are true.

Pascal used *De l'Esprit géométrique* to develop a theory of definition. He distinguishes between definitions that are conventional labels defined by the writer and definitions that are within the language and understood by everyone, since they naturally designate their referent. The second type would be a good example of the philosophy of *essentialism* (the view that every entity has a set of attributes that are necessary to its identity and function). Pascal proposes that only definitions of the first type are important to science and mathematics, arguing that these fields should adopt the philosophy of formalism, as propounded by Descartes.



Portrait of Descartes by Frans Hals — René Descartes (1596-1650) was a French philosopher, mathematician, and scientist. His work would have a major impact on the early thinking of Pascal.

OF THE GEOMETRICAL SPIRIT



WE MAY HAVE three principal objects in the study of truth: one to discover it when it is sought; another to demonstrate it when it is possessed; and a third, to discriminate it from the false when it is examined.

I do not speak of the first; I treat particularly of the second, and it includes the third. For if we know the method of proving the truth, we shall have, at the same time, that of discriminating it, since, in examining whether the proof that is given of it is in conformity with the rules that are understood, we shall know whether it is exactly demonstrated.

Geometry, which excels in these three methods, has explained the art of discovering unknown truths; this it is which is called *analysis*, and of which it would be useless to discourse after the many excellent works that have been written on it.

That of demonstrating truths already found, and of elucidating them in such a manner that the proof of them shall be irresistible, is the only one that I wish to give; and for this I have only to explain the method which geometry observes in it; for she teaches it perfectly by her examples, although she may produce no discourse on it. And since this art consists in two principal things, the one in proving each proposition by itself, the other in disposing all the propositions in the best order, I shall make of it two sections, of which the one will contain the rules for the conduct of geometrical, that is, methodical and perfect demonstrations; and the second will comprehend that of geometrical, that is, methodical and complete order: so that the two together will include all that will be necessary to direct reasoning, in proving and discriminating truths, which I design to give entire.

Section First — Of the method of geometrical, that is, of methodical and perfect demonstrations.

I cannot better explain the method that should be preserved to render demonstrations convincing, than by explaining that which is observed by geometry.

But it is first necessary that I should give the idea of a method still more eminent and more complete, but which mankind could never attain; for what exceeds geometry surpasses us; and, nevertheless, something must be said of it, although it is impossible to practise it.[1]

This true method, which would form demonstrations in the highest excellence, if it were possible to arrive at it, would consist in two principal things: the one, in employing no term the meaning of which had not first been clearly explained; the other, in never advancing any proposition which could not be demonstrated by truths already known; that is, in a word, in defining every term, and in proving every proposition. But to follow the same order that I am explaining, it is necessary that I should state what I mean by *definition*.

The only definitions recognized in geometry are what the logicians call *definitions of name*, that is, the arbitrary application of names to things which are clearly designated by terms perfectly known; and it is of these alone that I speak.

Their utility and use is to elucidate and abbreviate discourse, in expressing by the single name that has been imposed what could otherwise be only expressed by several terms; so that nevertheless the name imposed remains divested of all other meaning, if it has any, having no longer any than that for which it is alone designed. Here is an example:

If we are under the necessity of discriminating numbers that are divisible equally by two from those which are not, in order to avoid the frequent repetition of this condition, a name is given to it in this manner: I call every number divisible equally by two, *an even number*.

This is a geometrical definition; because after having clearly designated a thing, namely, every member divisible equally by two, we give it a name divested

of every other meaning, if it has any, in order to give it that of the thing designated.

Hence it appears that definitions are very arbitrary, and that they are never subject to contradiction; for nothing is more permissible than to give to a thing which has been clearly designated, whatever name we choose. It is only necessary to take care not to abuse the liberty that we possess of imposing names, by giving the same to two different things.

Not that this may not be permissible, provided we do not confound the consequences, and do not extend them from the one to the other.

But if we fall into this error, we can oppose to it a sure and infallible remedy: that of mentally substituting the definition in the place of the thing defined, and of having the definition always so present, that every time we speak, for example, of an even number, we mean precisely that which is divisible into two equal parts, and that these two things should be in such a degree joined and inseparable in thought, that as soon as the discourse expresses the one, the mind attaches it immediately to the other. For geometricians, and all those who proceed methodically, only impose names on things to abbreviate discourse, and not to diminish or change the idea of the things of which they are discoursing. And they pretend that the mind always supplies the full definition to the concise terms, which they only employ to avoid the confusion occasioned by the multitude of words.

Nothing more promptly and more effectually removes the captious cavils of sophists than this method, which it is necessary to have always present, and which alone suffices to banish all kinds of difficulties and equivocations.

These things being well understood, I return to the explanation of the true order, which consists, as I have said, in defining every thing and in proving every thing.

This method would certainly be beautiful, but it is absolutely impossible; for it is evident that the first terms that we wished to define would imply precedents to serve for their explanation, and that in the same manner, the first propositions that

we wished to prove would imply others which had preceded them; and thus it is clear that we should never reach the first.

Thus, in pushing our researches further and further, we arrive necessarily at primitive words which can no longer be defined, and at principles so clear that we can find no others that can serve as a proof of them.

Hence it appears that men are naturally and immutably impotent to treat of any science so that it may be in an absolutely complete order.

But it does not thence follow that we should abandon every kind of order.

For there is one, and it is that of geometry, which is in truth inferior in that it is less convincing, but not in that it is less certain. It does not define every thing and does not prove every thing, and it is in this that it is inferior; but it assumes nothing but things clear and constant by natural enlightenment, and this is why it is perfectly true, nature sustaining it in default of discourse.

This order, the most perfect of any among men, consists not at all in defining every thing or in demonstrating every thing, nor in defining nothing or in demonstrating nothing, but in adhering to this middle course of not defining things clear and understood by all mankind, and of defining the rest; of not proving all the things known to mankind, and of proving all the rest. Against this order those sin alike who undertake to define everything and to prove every thing, and who neglect to do it in those things which are not evident of themselves.

This is what is perfectly taught by geometry. She does not define any of these things, *space, time, motion, number, equality*, and similar things which exist in great number, because these terms so naturally designate the things that they mean, to those who understand the language, that their elucidation would afford more obscurity than instruction.

For there is nothing more feeble than the discourse of those who wish to define these primitive words. What necessity is there, for example, of explaining what is understood by the word *man*? Do we not know well enough what the thing is that we wish to designate by this term? And what advantage did Plato think to procure us in saying that he was a two-legged animal without feathers? As though the idea

that I have of him naturally, and which I cannot express, were not clearer and surer than that which he gives me by his useless and even ridiculous explanation; since a man does not lose humanity by losing the two legs, nor does a capon acquire it by losing his feathers.

There are those who are absurd enough to explain a word by the word itself. I know some who have defined light in this wise: *Light is a luminary movement of luminous bodies*, as though we could understand the words *luminary* and *luminous* without the word light.[2]

We cannot undertake to define being without falling into the same absurdity: for we cannot define a word without beginning with the word *it is*, either expressed or understood. To define being therefore, it is necessary to say *it is*, and thus to employ the word defined in the definition.

We see clearly enough from this that there are some words incapable of being defined; and, if nature had not supplied this defect by a corresponding idea which she has given to all mankind, all our expressions would be confused; whilst we use them with the same assurance and the same certainty as though they were explained in a manner perfectly exempt from ambiguities; because nature herself has given us, without words, a clearer knowledge of them than art could acquire by our explanations.

It is not because all men have the same idea of the essence of the things that I say that it is impossible and useless to define.

For, for example, time is of this sort. Who can define it? And why undertake it, since all men conceive what is meant in speaking of time, without any further definition? Nevertheless there are many different opinions touching the essence of time. Some say that it is the movement of a created thing; others, the measure of the movement, etc. Thus it is not the nature of these things that I say is known to all; it is simply the relation between the name and the thing; so that at the expression *time*, all direct their thoughts towards the same object; which suffices to cause this term to have no need of being defined, though afterwards, in examining what time is, we come to differ in sentiment after having been led to

think of it; for definitions are only made to designate the things that are named, and not to show the nature of them.

It is not because it is not permissible to call by the name of *time* the movement of a created thing; for, as I have just said, nothing is more arbitrary than definitions.

But after this definition there will be two things that will be called by the name of *time*: the one is what the whole world understands naturally by this word and what all those who speak our language call by this term; the other will be the movement of a created thing, for this will also be called by this name, according to this new definition.

It is necessary therefore to shun ambiguities and not to confound consequences. For it will not follow from this that the thing that is naturally understood by the word *time* is in fact the movement of a created thing. It has been allowable to name these two things the same; but it will not be to make them agree in nature as well as in name.

Thus, if we advance this proposition — *time is the movement of a created thing*, it is necessary to ask what is meant by this word *time*, that is, whether the usual and generally received meaning is left to it, or whether it is divested of this meaning in order to give to it on this occasion that of the movement of a created thing. For if it be stripped of all other meaning, it cannot be contradicted, and it will become an arbitrary definition, in consequence of which, as I have said, there will be two things that will have the same name. But if its ordinary meaning be left to it, and it be pretended nevertheless that what is meant by this word is the movement of a created thing, it can be contradicted. It is no longer an arbitrary definition, but a proposition that must be proved, if it is not evident of itself; and this will then be a principle or an axiom, but never a definition, since in this enunciation it is not understood that the word *time* signifies the same thing as the *movement of a created thing*, but it is understood that what is conceived by the term *time* is this supposed movement.

If I did not know how necessary it is to understand this perfectly, and how continually occasions like this, of which I give the example, happen both in familiar and scientific discourses, I should not dwell upon it. But it seems to me, by the experience that I have had from the confusion of controversies, that we cannot too fully enter into this spirit of precision, for the sake of which I write this treatise rather than the subject of which I treat in it.

For how many persons are there who fancy that they have defined time, when they have said that it is the measure of movement, leaving it, however, its ordinary meaning! And nevertheless they have made a proposition and not a definition. How many are there, in the like manner, who fancy that they have defined movement, when they have said: *Motus nec simpliciter motus, non mera potentia est, sed actus entis in potentia!* And nevertheless, if they leave to the word *movement* its ordinary meaning as they do, it is not a definition but a proposition; and confounding thus the definitions which they call *definitions of name*, which are the true arbitrary definitions permissible and geometrical, with those which they call *definitions of thing*, which, properly speaking, are not at all arbitrary definitions, but are subject to contradiction, they hold themselves at liberty to make these as well as others: and each defining the same things in his own way, by a liberty which is as unjustifiable in this kind of definitions as it is permissible in the former, they perplex every thing, and losing all order and all light, become lost themselves and wander into inextricable embarrassments.

We shall never fall Into such In following the order of geometry. This judicious science Is far from defining such primitive words as *space, time, motion, equality, majority, diminution, whole*, and others which every one understands.

But apart from these, the rest of the terms that this science employs are to such a degree elucidated and defined that we have no need of a dictionary to understand any of them; so that in a word all these terms are perfectly intelligible, either by natural enlightenment or by the definitions that it gives of them.

This is the manner in which it avoids all the errors that may be encountered upon the first point, which consists in defining only the things that have need of

it. It makes use of it in the same manner in respect to the other point, which consists in proving the propositions that are not evident.

For, when it has arrived at the first known truths, it pauses there and asks whether they are admitted, having nothing clearer whereby to prove them; so that all that is proposed by geometry is perfectly demonstrated, either by natural enlightenment or by proofs.

Hence it comes that if this science does not define and demonstrate every thing, it is for the simple reason that this is impossible.[3]

It will perhaps be found strange that geometry does not define any of the things that it has for its principal objects: for it can neither define motion, numbers, nor space; and nevertheless these three things are those of which it treats in particular, and according to the investigation of which it takes the three different names of *mechanics, arithmetic*, and *geometry*, this last name belonging to the genus and species.

But this will not surprise us if we remark that, this admirable science only attaching itself to the simplest things, this same quality which renders them worthy of being its objects renders them incapable of being defined; so that the lack of definition is a perfection rather than a defect, since it does not come from their obscurity, but on the contrary from their extreme obviousness, which is such that though it may not have the conviction of demonstrations, it has all their certainty. It supposes therefore that we know what is the thing that is understood by the words *motion, number, space*; and without stopping to define them to no purpose, it penetrates their nature and discovers their marvellous properties.

These three things which comprehend the whole universe, according to the words: *Deus fecit omnia in pondere, in numero, et mensura*,[4] have a reciprocal and necessary connection. For we cannot imagine motion without something that moves; and this thing being one, this unity is the origin of all numbers; and lastly, motion not being able to exist without space, we see these three things included within the first.

Time even is also comprehended in it; for motion and time are relative to each other; speed and slowness, which are the differences of motion, having a necessary relation to time.

Thus there are properties common to all these things, the knowledge of which opens the mind to the greatest marvels of nature.

The chief of these comprehends the two infinitudes which are combined in every thing: the one of greatness the other of littleness.

For however quick a movement may be, we can conceive of one still more so; and so on *ad infinitum*, without ever reaching one that would be swift to such a degree that nothing more could be added to it. And, on the contrary, however slow a movement may be, it can be retarded still more; and thus *ad infinitum*, without ever reaching such a degree of slowness that we could not thence descend into an infinite number of others, without falling into rest.

In the same manner, however great a number may be, we can conceive of a greater; and thus *ad infinitum*, without ever reaching one that can no longer be increased. And on the contrary, however small a number may be, as the hundredth or ten thousandth part, we can still conceive of a less; and so on *ad infinitum*, without ever arriving at zero or nothingness.

However great a space may be, we can conceive of a greater; and thus *ad infinitum*, without ever arriving at one which can no longer be increased. And, on the contrary, however small a space may be, we can still imagine a smaller; and so on *ad infinitum*, without ever arriving at one indivisible, which has no longer any extent.

It is the same with time. We can always conceive of a greater without an ultimate, and of a less without arriving at a point and a pure nothingness of duration.

That is, in a word, whatever movement, whatever number, whatever space, whatever time there may be, there is always a greater and a less than these: so that they all stand betwixt nothingness and the infinite, being always infinitely distant from these extremes.

All these truths cannot be demonstrated; and yet they are the foundations and principles of geometry. But as the cause that renders them incapable of demonstration is not their obscurity, but on the contrary their extreme obviousness, this lack of proof is not a defect, but rather a perfection.

From which we see that geometry can neither define objects nor prove principles; but for this single and advantageous reason that both are in an extreme natural clearness, which convinces reason more powerfully than discourse.

For what is more evident than this truth, that a number whatever it may be, can be increased — can be doubled? Again, may not the speed of a movement be doubled, and may not a space be doubled in the same manner?

And who too can doubt that a number, whatever it may be, may not be divided into a half, and its half again into another half? For would this half be a nothingness? And would these two halves, which would be two zeros, compose a number?

In the same manner, may not a movement, however slow it may be, be reduced in speed by a half, so that it will pass over the same space in double the time, and this last movement again? For would this be a perfect rest? And would these two halves of velocity, which would be two rests, compose again the first velocity?

Lastly, may not a space, however small it may be, be divided into two, and these halves again? And how could these two halves become indivisible without extent, which joined together made the former extent?

There is no natural knowledge in mankind that precedes this, and surpasses it in clearness. Nevertheless, in order that there may be examples for every thing, we find minds, excellent in all things else, that are shocked by these infinities and can in no wise assent to them.

I have never known any person who thought that a space could not be increased. But I have seen some, very capable in other respects, who affirmed that a space could be divided into two indivisible parts, however absurd the idea may seem.

I have applied myself to investigating what could be the cause of this obscurity, and have found that it chiefly consisted in this, that they could not conceive of a continuity divisible *ad infinitum*, whence they concluded that it was not divisible.

It is an infirmity natural to man to believe that he possesses truth directly; and thence it comes that he is always disposed to deny every thing that is incomprehensible to him; whilst in fact he knows naturally nothing but falsehood, and whilst he ought to receive as true only those things the contrary of which appear to him as false.

And hence, whenever a proposition is inconceivable, it is necessary to suspend the judgment on it and not to deny it from this indication, but to examine its opposite; and if this is found to be manifestly false, we can boldly affirm the former, however incomprehensible it may be. Let us apply this rule to our subject.

There is no geometrician that does not believe space divisible *ad infinitum*. He can no more be such without this principle than man can exist without a soul. And nevertheless there is none who comprehends an infinite division; and he only assures himself of this truth by this one, but certainly sufficient reason, that he perfectly comprehends that it is false that by dividing a space we can reach an indivisible part, that, is, one that has no extent.

For what is there more absurd than to pretend that by continually dividing a space, we shall finally arrive at such a division that on dividing it into two, each of the halves shall remain indivisible and without any extent, and that thus the two negations of extensions will together compose an extent? For I would ask those who hold this idea, whether they conceive clearly two indivisibles being brought into contact; if this is throughout, they are only the same thing, and consequently the two together are indivisible; and if it is not throughout, it is then but in a part; then they have parts, therefore they are not indivisible.

If they confess, as in fact they admit when pressed, that their proposition is as inconceivable as the other, they acknowledge that it is not by our capacity for conceiving these things that we should judge of their truth, since these two

contraries being both inconceivable, it is nevertheless necessarily certain that one of the two is true.

But as to these chimerical difficulties, which have relation only to our weakness, they oppose this natural clearness and these solid truths: if it were true that space was composed of a certain finite number of indivisibles, it would follow that two spaces, each of which should be square, that is, equal and similar on every side, being the one the double of the other, the one would contain a number of these indivisibles double the number of the indivisibles of the other. Let them bear this consequence well in mind, and let them then apply themselves to ranging points in squares until they shall have formed two, the one of which shall have double the points of the other; and then I will make every geometrician in the world yield to them. But if the thing is naturally impossible, that is, if it is an insuperable impossibility to range squares of points, the one of which shall have double the number of the other, as I would demonstrate on the spot did the thing merit that we should dwell on it, let them draw therefrom the consequence.

And to console them for the trouble they would have in certain junctures, as in conceiving that a space may have an infinity of divisibles, seeing that these are run over in so little time during which this infinity of divisibles would be run over, we must admonish them that they should not compare things so disproportionate as is the infinity of divisibles with the little time in which they are run over: but let them compare the entire space with the entire time, and the infinite divisibles of the space with the infinite moments of the time; and thus they will find that we pass over an infinity of divisibles in an infinity of moments, and a little space in a little time; in which there is no longer the disproportion that astonished them.

Lastly, if they find it surprising that a small space has as many parts as a great one, let them understand also that they are smaller in measure, and let them look at the firmament through a diminishing glass, to familiarize themselves with this knowledge, by seeing every part of the sky in every part of the glass.

But if they cannot comprehend that parts so small that to us they are imperceptible, can be divided as often as the firmament, there is no better remedy than to make them look through glasses that magnify this delicate point to a prodigious mass; whence they will easily conceive that by the aid of another glass still more artistically cut, they could be magnified so as to equal that firmament the extent of which they admire. And thus these objects appearing to them now easily divisible, let them remember that nature can do infinitely more than art.

For, in fine, who has assured them that these glasses change the natural magnitude of these objects, instead of re-establishing, on the contrary, the true magnitude which the shape of our eye may change and contract like glasses that diminish?

It is annoying to dwell upon such trifles; but there are times for trifling.

It suffices to say to minds clear on this matter that two negations of extension cannot make an extension. But as there are some who pretend to elude this light by this marvellous answer, that two negations of extension can as well make an extension as two units, neither of which is a number, can make a number by their combination; it is necessary to reply to them that they might in the same manner deny that twenty thousand men make an army, although no single one of them is an army; that a thousand houses make a town, although no single one is a town; or that the parts make the whole, although no single one is the whole; or, to remain in the comparison of numbers, that two binaries make a quaternary, and ten tens a hundred, although no single one is such.

But it is not to have an accurate mind to confound by such unequal comparisons the immutable nature of things with their arbitrary and voluntary names, names dependent upon the caprice of the men who invented them. For it is clear that to facilitate discourse the name of *army* has been given to twenty thousand men, that of *town* to several houses, that of *ten* to ten units; and that from this liberty spring the names of *unity, binary, quaternary, ten, hundred*, different through our caprices, although these things may be in fact of the same kind by their unchangeable nature, and are all proportionate to each other and

differ only in being greater or less, and although, as a result of these names, binary may not be a quaternary, nor the house a town, any more than the town is a house. But again, although a house is not a town, it is not however a negation of a town; there is a great difference between not being a thing, and being a negation of it.

For, in order to understand the thing to the bottom, it is necessary to know that the only reason why unity is not in the ranks of numbers, is that Euclid and the earliest authors who treated of arithmetic, having several properties to give that were applicable to all the numbers except unity, in order to avoid often repeating that *in all numbers except unity this condition is found*, have excluded unity from the signification of the word *number*, by the liberty which we have already said can be taken at will with definitions. Thus, if they had wished, they could in the same manner have excluded the binary and ternary, and all else that it pleased them; for we are master of these terms, provided we give notice of it; as on the contrary we may place unity when we like in the rank of numbers, and fractions in the same manner. And, in fact, we are obliged to do it in general propositions, to avoid saying constantly, that *in all numbers, as well as in unity and in fractions, such a property is found*; and it is in this indefinite sense that I have taken it in all that I have written on it.

But the same Euclid who has taken away from unity the name of number, which it was permissible for him to do, in order to make it understood nevertheless that it is not a negation, but is on the contrary of the same species, thus defines homogeneous magnitudes: *Magnitudes are said to be of the same kind, when one being multiplied several times may exceed the other*; and consequently, since unity can, being multiplied several times, exceed any number whatsoever, it is precisely of the same kind with numbers through its essence and its immutable nature, in the meaning of the same Euclid who would not have it called a number.

It is not the same thing with an indivisible in respect to an extension. For it not only differs in name, which is voluntary, but it differs in kind, by the same

definition; since an indivisible, multiplied as many times as we like, is so far from being able to exceed an extension, that it can never form any thing else than a single and exclusive indivisible; which is natural and necessary, as has been already shown. And as this last proof is founded upon the definition of these two things, indivisible and extension, we will proceed to finish and perfect the demonstration.

An indivisible is that which has no part, and extension is that which has divers separate parts.

According to these definitions, I affirm that two indivisibles united do not make an extension.

For when they are united, they touch each other in some part; and thus the parts whereby they come in contact are not separate, since otherwise they would not touch each other. Now, by their definition, they have no other parts; therefore they have no separate parts; therefore they are not an extension by the definition of extension which involves the separation of parts.

The same thing will be shown of all the other indivisibles that may be brought into junction, for the same reason. And consequently an indivisible, multiplied as many times as we like, will not make an extension. Therefore it is not of the same kind as extension, by the definition of things of the same kind.

It is in this manner that we demonstrate that indivisibles are not of the same species as numbers. Hence it arises that two units may indeed make a number, because they are pf the same kind; and that two indivisibles do not make a extension, because they are not of the same kind.

Hence we see how little reason there is in comparing the relation that exists between unity and numbers with that which exists between indivisibles and extension.

But if we wish to take in numbers a comparison that represents with accuracy what we are considering in extension, this must be the relation of zero to numbers; for zero is not of the same kind as numbers, since, being multiplied, it cannot exceed them: so that it is the true indivisibility of number, as indivisibility

is the true zero of extension. And a like one will be found between rest and motion, and between an instant and time; for all these things are heterogeneous in their magnitudes, since being infinitely multiplied, they can never make any thing else than indivisibles, any more than the indivisibles of extension, and for the same reason. And then we shall find a perfect correspondence between these things; for all these magnitudes are divisible *ad infinitum*, without ever falling into their indivisibles, so that they all hold a middle place between infinity and nothingness.

Such is the admirable relation that nature has established between these things, and the two marvellous infinities which she has proposed to mankind, not to comprehend, but to admire; and to finish the consideration of this by a last remark, I will add that these two infinites, although infinitely different, are notwithstanding relative to each other, in such a manner that the knowledge of the one leads necessarily to the knowledge of the other.

For in numbers, inasmuch as they can be continually augmented, it absolutely follows that they can be continually diminished, and this clearly; for if a number can be multiplied to 100,000, for example, 100,000th part can also be taken from it, by dividing it by the same number by which it is multiplied; and thus every term of augmentation will become a term of division, by changing the whole into a fraction. So that infinite augmentation also includes necessarily infinite division.

And in space the same relation is seen between these two contrary infinites; that is, that inasmuch as a space can be infinitely prolonged, it follows that it may be infinitely diminished, as appears in this example: If we look through a glass at a vessel that recedes continually in a straight line, it is evident that any point of the vessel observed will continually advance by a perpetual flow in proportion as the ship recedes. Therefore if the course of the vessel is extended *ad infinitum*, this point will continually recede; and yet it will never reach that point in which the horizontal ray carried from the eye to the glass shall fall, so that it will constantly approach it without ever reaching it, unceasingly dividing the space which will remain under this horizontal point without ever arriving at it. From

which is seen the necessary conclusion that is drawn from the infinity of the extension of the course of the vessel to the infinite and infinitely minute division of this little space remaining beneath this horizontal point.

Those who will not be satisfied with these reasons, and will persist in the belief that space is not divisible *ad infinitum*, can make no pretensions to geometrical demonstrations, and although they may be enlightened in other things, they will be very little in this; for one can easily be a very capable man and a bad geometrician.

But those who clearly perceive these truths will be able to admire the grandeur and power of nature in this double infinity that surrounds us on all sides, and to learn by this marvellous consideration to know themselves, in regarding themselves thus placed between infinitude and a negation of extension, between an infinitude and a negation of number, between an infinitude and a negation of movement, between an infinitude and a negation of time. From which we may learn to estimate ourselves at our true value, and to form reflections which will be worth more than all the rest of geometry itself.

I have thought myself obliged to enter into this long discussion for the benefit of those who, not comprehending at first this double infinity, are capable of being persuaded of it. And although there may be many who have sufficient enlightenment to dispense with it, it may nevertheless happen that this discourse which will be necessary to the one will not be entirely useless to the other.

ENDNOTES.

[1] After this paragraph occur in the MS. the following lines, written in a finer hand, and inclosed in parenthesis: "…is much more to succeed in the one than the other, and I have chosen this science to attain it only because it alone knows the true rules of reasoning, and, without stopping at the rules of syllogisms which are so natural that we cannot be ignorant of them, stops and establishes itself upon the true method of conducting reasoning in all things, which almost every one is ignorant of, and which it is so advantageous to

know, that we see by experience that among equal minds and like circumstances, he who possesses geometry bears it away, and acquires a new vigor. “I wish, therefore, to explain what demonstrations are by the example of those of geometry, which is almost the only one of the human sciences that produces infallible ones, because she alone observes the true method, whilst all the others are, through a natural necessity, in a sort of confusion, which the geometricians alone know exceedingly well how to comprehend.” On the margin of this fragment is in the MS. the following note: “That which is in small characters was hidden under a paper, the edges of which were glued, and upon which was written the article beginning: I cannot better explain, etc.” — *Faugère.*

[2] Pascal alludes here to Father Noël, a Jesuit, with whom he had had a warm discussion on the subject of his *Expériences touchant le vide*. In a letter that he wrote to Father Noël in 1647, he said: “The sentence which precedes your closing compliments defines light in these terms: *Light* is a *luminous motion of rays composed of lucid, that is, luminous bodies;* upon which, I have to tell you that it seems to me that you ought first to have defined what *luminous* is, and what a *lucid* or *luminous body* is, for till then, I cannot understand what light is. And as we never make use in definitions of the term of the *thing defined*, I should have difficulty in conforming to yours which says: Light is a luminary motion of a luminous body.” — *Faugère*.

[3] Here the MS. adds in parenthesis: “(But as nature punishes all that science does not bestow, its order in truth does not give a superhuman perfection, but it has all that man can attain. It has seemed to me proper to give from the beginning of this discourse this, etc.). — *Faugère*.

[4] “God has made all things in weight, number and proportion.”

On the Art of Persuasion (1658)

Translated by Orlando Williams Wight, 1859

In *De l'Art de persuader* Pascal explores deeper into geometry's axiomatic method, specifically probing the question of how people come to be convinced of the axioms upon which later conclusions are based. Pascal agrees with Montaigne that achieving certainty in these axioms and conclusions through human methods is impossible. He asserts that these principles can be grasped only through intuition and that this fact identifies the necessity for submission to God in searching out truths.



Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592) was one of the most significant philosophers of the French Renaissance, known for popularising the essay as a literary genre. His work is noted for its merging of casual anecdotes and autobiography with intellectual insight.

THE ART OF PERSUASION



THE ART OF persuasion has a necessary relation to the manner in which men are led to consent to that which is proposed to them, and to the conditions of things which it is sought to make them believe.

No one is ignorant that there are two avenues by which opinions are received into the soul, which are its two principal powers: the understanding and the will. The more natural is that of the understanding, for we should never consent to any but demonstrated truths; but the more common, though the one contrary to nature, is that of the will; for all men are almost led to believe not of proof, but by attraction. This way is base, ignoble, and irrelevant: every one therefore disavows it. Each one professes to believe and even to love nothing but what he knows to be worthy of belief and love.

I do not speak here of divine truths, which I shall take care not to comprise under the art of persuasion, because they are infinitely superior to nature: God alone can place them in the soul and in such a way as it pleases him. I know that he has desired that they should enter from the heart into the mind, and not from the mind into the heart, to humiliate that proud power of reasoning that pretends to the right to be the judge of the things that the will chooses; and to cure this infirm will which is wholly corrupted by its filthy attachments. And thence it comes that whilst in speaking of human things, we say that it is necessary to know them before we can love them, which has passed into a proverb,[1] the saints on the contrary say in speaking of divine things that it is necessary to love them in order to know them, and that we only enter truth through charity, from which they have made one of their most useful maxims.

From which it appears that God has established this natural order, which is directly contrary to the order that should be natural to men in natural things. They

have nevertheless corrupted this order by making of profane things what they should make of holy things, because in fact we believe scarcely any thing except that which pleases us. And thence comes the aversion which we have to consenting to the truths of the Christian religion that are opposed to our pleasures. “Tell us of pleasant things and we will hearken to you,” said the Jews to Moses; as if the agreeableness of a thing should regulate belief! And it is to punish this disorder by an order which is conformed to him, that God only pours out his light into the mind after having subdued the rebellion of the will by an altogether heavenly gentleness which charms and wins it.

I speak therefore only of the truths within our reach; and it is of them that I say that the mind and the heart are as doors by which they are received into the soul, but that very few enter by the mind, whilst they are brought in in crowds by the rash caprices of the will, without the counsel of the reason.

These powers have each their principles and their mainsprings of action.

Those of the mind are truths which are natural and known to all the world, as that the whole is greater than its part, besides several particular maxims that are received by some and not by others, but which as soon as they are admitted are as powerful, although false, in carrying away belief, as those the most true.

Those of the will are certain desires natural and common to all mankind, as the desire of being happy, which no one can avoid having, besides several particular objects which each one follows in order to attain, and which having the power to please us are as powerful, although pernicious in fact, in causing the will to act, as though they made its veritable happiness.

So much for that which regards the powers that lead us to consent.

But as for the qualities of things which should persuade us, they are very different.

Some are drawn, by a necessary consequence, from common principles and admitted truths. These may be infallibly persuasive; for in showing the harmony which they have with acknowledged principles there is an inevitable necessity of conviction, and it is impossible that they shall not be received into the soul as

soon as it has been enabled to class them among the principles which it has already admitted.

There are some which have a close connection with the objects of our satisfaction; and these again are received with certainty, for as soon as the soul has been made to perceive that a thing can conduct it to that which it loves supremely, it must inevitably embrace it with joy.

But those which have this double union both with admitted truths and with the desires of the heart, are so sure of their effect that there is nothing that can be more so in nature. As, on the contrary, that which does not accord either with our belief or with our pleasures is importunate, false, and absolutely alien to us.

In all these positions, there is no room for doubt. But there are some wherein the things which it is sought to make us believe are well established upon truths which are known, but which are at the same time contrary to the pleasures that interest us most. And these are in great danger of showing, by an experience which is only too common, what I said at the beginning — that this imperious soul, which boasted of acting only by reason, follows by a rash and shameful choice the desires of a corrupt will, whatever resistance may be opposed to it by the too enlightened mind.

Then it is that a doubtful balance is made between truth and pleasure, and that the knowledge of the one and the feeling of the other stir up a combat the success of which is very uncertain, since, in order to judge of it, it would be necessary to know all that passes in the innermost spirit of the man, of which the man himself is scarcely ever conscious.

It appears from this, that whatever it may be of which we wish to persuade men, it is necessary to have regard to the person whom we wish to persuade, of whom we must know the mind and the heart, what principles he acknowledges, what things he loves; and then observe in the thing in question what affinity it has with the acknowledged principles, or with the objects so delightful by the pleasure which they give him.

So that the art of persuasion consists as much in that of pleasing as in that of convincing, so much more are men governed by caprice than by reason! Now, of these two methods, the one of convincing, the other of pleasing, I shall only give here the rules of the first; and this in case we have granted the principles, and remain firm in avowing them: otherwise I do not know whether there could be an art for adapting proofs to the inconstancy of our caprices.

But the manner of pleasing is incomparably more difficult, more subtle, more useful, and more admirable; therefore, if I do not treat of it, it is because I am not capable of it; and I feel myself so far disproportionate to the task, that I believe the thing absolutely impossible.

Not that I do not believe that there may be as sure rules for pleasing as for demonstrating, and that he who knows perfectly how to comprehend and to practice them will as surely succeed in making himself beloved by princes and by people of all conditions, as in demonstrating the elements of geometry to those who have enough imagination to comprehend its hypotheses. But I consider, and it is, perhaps, my weakness that makes me believe it, that it is impossible to reach this. At least I know that if any are capable of it, they are certain persons whom I know, and that no others have such clear and such abundant light on this matter.

The reason of this extreme difficulty comes from the fact that the principles of pleasure are not firm and stable. They are different in all mankind, and variable in every particular with such a diversity that there is no man more different from another than from himself at different times. A man has other pleasures than a woman; a rich man and a poor man have different enjoyments; a prince, a warrior, a merchant, a citizen, a peasant, the old, the young, the well, the sick, all vary; the least accidents change them.

Now there is an art, and it is that which I give, for showing the connection of truths with their principles, whether of truth or of pleasure, provided that the principles which have once been avowed remain firm, and without being ever contradicted.

But as there are few principles of this kind, and as, apart from geometry, which deals only with very simple figures, there are hardly any truths upon which we always remain agreed, and still fewer objects of pleasure which we do not change every hour, I do not know whether there is a means of giving fixed rules for adapting discourse to the inconstancy of our caprices.

This art, which I call the *art of persuading*, and which, properly speaking, is simply the process of perfect methodical proofs, consists of three essential parts: of defining the terms of which we should avail ourselves by clear definitions; of proposing principles or evident axioms to prove the thing in question; and of always mentally substituting in the demonstrations the definition in the place of the thing defined.

The reason of this method is evident, since it would be useless to propose what it is sought to prove, and to undertake the demonstration of it, if all the terms which are not intelligible had not first been clearly defined; and since it is necessary in the same manner that the demonstration should be preceded by the demand for the evident principles that are necessary to it, for if we do not secure the foundation we cannot secure the edifice; and since, in fine, it is necessary in demonstrating mentally, to substitute the definitions in the place of the things defined, as otherwise there might be an abuse of the different meanings that are encountered in the terms. It is easy to see that, by observing this method, we are sure of convincing, since the terms all being understood, and perfectly exempt from ambiguity by the definitions, and the principles being granted, if in the demonstration we always mentally substitute the definitions for the things defined, the invincible force of the conclusions cannot fail of having its whole effect.

Thus, never can a demonstration in which these conditions have been observed be subject to the slightest doubt; and never can those have force in which they are wanting.

It is, therefore, of great importance to comprehend and to possess them; and hence, to render the thing easier and more practicable, I shall give them all in a

few rules which include all that is necessary for the perfection of the definitions, the axioms, and the demonstrations, and consequently of the entire method of the geometrical proofs of the art of persuading.

Rules for Definitions

I. Not to undertake to define any of the things so well known of themselves that clearer terms cannot be had to explain them.

II. Not to leave any terms that are at all obscure or ambiguous without definition.

III. Not to employ in the definition of terms any words but such as are perfectly known or already explained.

Rules for Axioms

I. Not to omit any necessary principle without asking whether it is admitted, however clear and evident it may be.

II. Not to demand, in axioms, any but things that are perfectly evident of themselves.

Rules for Demonstrations

I. Not to undertake to demonstrate any thing that is so evident of itself that nothing can be given that is clearer to prove it.

II. To prove all propositions at all obscure, and to employ in their proof only very evident maxims or propositions already admitted or demonstrated.

III. To always mentally substitute definitions in the place of things defined, in order not to be misled by the ambiguity of terms which have been restricted by definitions.

These eight rules contain all the precepts for solid and immutable proofs, three of which are not absolutely necessary and may be neglected without error; while it is difficult and almost impossible to observe them always exactly, although it is more accurate to do so as far as possible; these are the three first of each of the divisions.

For definitions. Not to define any terms that are perfectly known.

For axioms. Not to omit to require any axioms perfectly evident and simple.

For demonstrations. Not to demonstrate any things well-known of themselves.

For it is unquestionable that it is no great error to define and clearly explain things, although very clear of themselves, nor to omit to require in advance axioms which cannot be refused in the place where they are necessary; nor lastly to prove propositions that would be admitted without proof.

But the five other rules are of absolute necessity, and cannot be dispensed with without essential defect and often without error; and for this reason I shall recapitulate them here in detail.

Rules necessary for definitions. Not to leave any terms at all obscure or ambiguous without definition;

Not to employ in definitions any but terms perfectly known or already explained.

Rule necessary for axioms. Not to demand in axioms any but things perfectly evident.

Rules necessary for demonstrations. To prove all propositions, and to employ nothing for their proof but axioms fully evident of themselves, or propositions already demonstrated or admitted;

Never to take advantage of the ambiguity of terms by failing mentally to substitute definitions that restrict and explain them.

These five rules form all that is necessary to render proofs convincing, immutable, and to say all, geometrical; and the eight rules together render them still more perfect.

I pass now to that of the order in which the propositions should be arranged, to be in a complete geometrical series.

After having established[2]

This is in what consists the art of persuading, which is comprised in these two principles: to define all the terms of which we make use; to prove them all by mentally substituting definitions in the place of things defined.

And here it seems to me proper to anticipate three principal objections which may be made:

1st, that this method has nothing new; 2d, that it is very easy to learn, it being unnecessary for this to study the elements of geometry, since it consists in these two words that are known at the first reading; and, 3d, that it is of little utility, since its use is almost confined to geometrical subjects alone.

It is necessary therefore to show that there is nothing so little known, nothing more difficult to practise, and nothing more useful or more universal.

As to the first objection, that these rules are common in the world, that it is necessary to define every thing and to prove every thing, and that logicians themselves have placed them among the principles of their art, I would that the thing were true and that it were so well known that I should not have the trouble of tracing with so much care the source of all the defects of reasonings which are truly so common. But so little is this the case, that, geometricians alone excepted, who are so few in number that they are single in a whole nation and long periods of time, we see no others who know it. It will be easy to make this understood by those who have perfectly comprehended the little that I have said; but if they have not fully comprehended this, I confess that they will learn nothing from it.

But if they have entered into the spirit of these rules, and if the rules have made sufficient impression on them to become rooted and established in their minds, they will feel how much difference there is between what is said here and what a few logicians may perhaps have written by chance approximating to it in a few passages of their works.

Those who have the spirit of discernment know how much difference there is between two similar words, according to their position, and the circumstances that accompany them. Will it be maintained, indeed, that two persons who have read the same book, and learned it by heart, have a like acquaintance with it, if the one comprehends it in such a manner that he knows all its principles, the force of its conclusions, the answers to the objections that may be made to it, and the whole economy of the work; while to the other these are but dead letters and seeds, which, although like those which have produced such fruitful trees, remain dry and unproductive in the sterile mind that has received them in vain.

All who say the same things do not possess them in the same manner; and hence the incomparable author of the *Art of Conversation*[3] pauses with so much care to make it understood that we must not judge of the capacity of a man by the excellence of a happy remark that we have heard him make; but instead of extending our admiration of a good speech to the speaker, let us penetrate, says he, the mind from which it proceeds; let us try whether he owes it to his memory, or to a happy chance; let us receive it with coldness and contempt, in order to see whether he will feel that we do not give to what he says the esteem which its value deserves: it will oftenest be seen that he will be made to disavow it on the spot, and will be drawn very far from this better thought in which he does not believe, to plunge himself into another quite base and ridiculous. We must, therefore, sound in what manner this thought is lodged in its author;[4] how, whence, to what extent he possesses it; otherwise, the hasty judgment will be a rash judge.

I would inquire of reasonable persons whether this principle: *Matter is naturally wholly incapable of thought*, and this other: *I think, therefore I am*, are

in fact the same in the mind of Descartes, and in that of St. Augustine, who said the same thing twelve hundred years before.[5]

In truth, I am far from affirming that Descartes is not the real author of it, even though he may have learned it only in reading this distinguished saint; for I know how much difference there is between writing a word by chance without making a longer and more extended reflection on it, and perceiving in this word an admirable series of conclusions, which prove the distinction between material and spiritual natures, and making of it a firm and sustained principle of a complete metaphysical system, as Descartes has pretended to do. For without examining whether he has effectively succeeded in his pretension, I assume that he has done so, and it is on this supposition that I say that this expression is as different in his writings from the same saying in others who have said it by chance, as is a man full of life and strength from a corpse.

One man will say a thing of himself without comprehending its excellence, in which another will discern a marvellous series of conclusions, which make us affirm boldly that it is no longer the same expression, and that he is no more indebted for it to the one from whom he has learned it, than a beautiful tree belongs to the one who cast the seed, without thinking of it, or knowing it, into the fruitful soil which caused its growth by its own fertility.

The same thoughts sometimes put forth quite differently in the mind of another than in that of their author: unfruitful in their natural soil, abundant when transplanted. But it much oftener happens that a good mind itself makes its own thoughts produce all the fruit of which they are capable, and that afterwards others, having heard them admired, borrow them, and adorn themselves with them, but without knowing their excellence; and it is then that the difference of the same word in different mouths is the most apparent.

It is in this manner that logic has borrowed, perhaps, the rules of geometry, without comprehending their force; and thus, in placing them by chance among those that belong to it, it does not thence follow that they[6] have entered into the spirit of geometry, and I should be greatly averse if they gave no other evidence

of it than that of having mentioned it by chance, to placing them on a level with that science that teaches the true method of directing the reason.

But I should be, on the contrary, strongly disposed to exclude them from it, and almost irrevocably. For to have said it by chance, without having taken care that every thing was included within it, and instead of following this light to wander blindly in useless researches, pursuing what they promise but never can give, is truly showing that they are not very clear-sighted, and much more than if they had failed to follow the light, because they had not perceived it.

The method of not erring is sought by all the world. The logicians profess to guide to it, the geometricians alone attain it, and apart from their science, and the imitations of it, there are no true demonstrations. The whole art is included in the simple precepts that we have given; they alone are sufficient, they alone afford proofs; all other rules are useless or injurious. This I know by long experience of all kinds of books and persons.

And on this point I pass the same judgment as those who say that geometricians give them nothing new by these rules, because they possessed them in reality, but confounded with a multitude of others, either useless or false, from which they could not discriminate them, as those who seeking a diamond of great price amidst a number of false ones, but from which they know not how to distinguish it, should boast, in holding them all together, of possessing the true one equally with him who without pausing at this mass of rubbish lays his hand upon the costly stone which they are seeking and for which they do not throw away the rest.

The defect of false reasoning is a malady which is cured by these two remedies. Another has been compounded of an infinity of useless herbs in which the good are enveloped and in which they remain without effect through the ill qualities of the compound.

To discover all the sophistries and equivocations of captious reasonings, they have invented barbarous names that astonish those who hear them; and whilst we can only unravel all the tangles of this perplexing knot by drawing out one of the

ends in the way proposed by geometricians, they have indicated a strange number of others in which the former are found included without knowing which is the best.

And thus, in showing us a number of paths which they say conduct us whither we tend, although there are but two that lead to it, it is necessary to know how to mark them in particular. It will be pretended that geometry which indicates them with certainty gives only what had already been given by others, because they gave in fact the same thing and more, without heeding that this boon lost its value by abundance, and was diminished by adding to it.

Nothing is more common than good things: the point in question is only to discriminate them; and it is certain that they are all natural and within our reach and even known to all mankind. But they know not how to distinguish them. This is universal. It is not among extraordinary and fantastic things that excellence is to be found, of whatever kind it may be. We rise to attain it and become removed from it: it is oftenest necessary to stoop for it. The best books are those, which those who read them believe they themselves could have written. Nature, which alone is good, is wholly familiar and common.

I make no doubt therefore that these rules, being the true ones, are simple, artless, and natural, as in fact they are. It is not *Barbara* and *Baralipton* that constitute reasoning. The mind must not be forced; artificial and constrained manners fill it with foolish presumption, through unnatural elevation and vain and ridiculous inflation, instead of solid and vigorous nutriment. And one of the principal reasons that diverts those who are entering upon this knowledge so much from the true path which they should follow, is the fancy that they take at the outset that good things are inaccessible, giving them the name of *great, lofty, elevated, sublime*. This destroys every thing. I would call them *low, common, familiar:* these names suit them better; I hate such inflated expressions.

ENDNOTES.

[1] Ignoti nulla cupido— "We do not desire what we do not know."

[2] The rest of the phrase is wanting; and all this second part of the composition, either because it was not redacted by Pascal, or because it has been lost, is found neither in our MS. nor in Father Desmolets. — *Faugère*

[3] Montaigne, *Essais*, liv. III, chap. viii.—*Faugère*.

[4] Montaigne's expression is: "Feel on all sides how it is lodged in its author." *Essais*, same chapter.—*Ibid*.

[5] *Civ. Dei*, 1. XI, c. xxvi.

[6] Doubtless *the logicians.—Faugère.*

Thoughts (1670)

Translated by Charles K. Paul, 1888 and William Finlayson Trotter, 1910

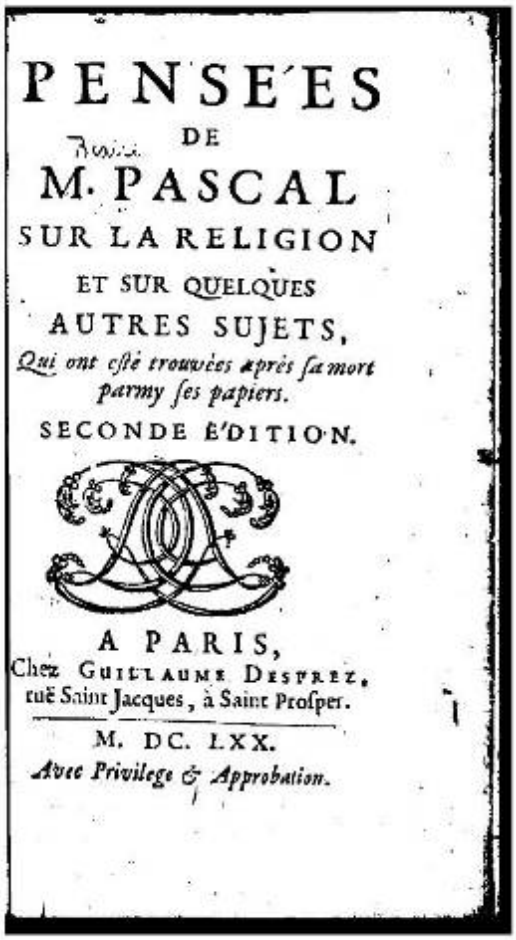
Pascal's most influential theological work, *Pensées* was left unfinished before his death. It was intended to be a sustained and coherent examination and defense of the Christian faith, with the original title being *Apologie de la religion Chrétienne* (Defense of the Christian Religion). The first version of the numerous pieces of paper found after his death appeared in print as a book in 1669, titled *Pensées de M. Pascal sur la religion, et sur quelques autres sujets* (Thoughts of M. Pascal on religion, and on some other subjects). Celebrated as a landmark of French prose, *Pensées* soon became a classic of world philosophy.

Although the extant text appears to consist of incomplete jottings, it is believed that Pascal had, prior to his death in 1662, already planned out the order of the book and had begun the task of fashioning his draft notes into a coherent form. As this task was left incomplete, subsequent editors have disagreed on the order, if any, in which the book should be read. The first English translation was made in 1688 by John Walker.

One of the text's main strategies was to use the contradictory philosophies of Pyrrhonism (the earliest Western form of philosophical skepticism) and Stoicism (a philosophy of personal ethics informed by a system of logic and its views on the natural world). These two viewpoints are represented by Montaigne on the one hand, and Epictetus on the other, in order to bring the unbeliever to such despair and confusion that he would embrace God. As Pascal's religious conversion had led him into a life of asceticism, the *Pensées* was in many ways his life's work. It represents the philosopher's defense of the Christian religion.

The famous concept of "Pascal's wager" originates from this book. This argument posits that humans 'bet' with their lives that God either exists or does not. Pascal states that a rational person should live as though God exists and seek

to believe in God. If God does not actually exist, such a person will have only a finite loss (pleasures, luxury, etc.), whereas if God does exist, he stands to receive infinite gains (as represented by eternity in Heaven), while avoiding infinite losses (eternity in Hell). This concept was based on the idea of the Christian God, though similar arguments have occurred in other religious traditions. Pascal's wager was groundbreaking as it charted new territory in probability theory, marking the first formal use of decision theory, existentialism, pragmatism and voluntarism.



PENSE'ES

DE

M. PASCAL

SUR LA RELIGION

ET SUR QUELQUES

AUTRES SUJETS,

Qui ont eſté trouvées après ſa mort parmy ſes papiers.

SECONDE EDITION.

A PARIS,

Chez GUILLAUME DESPREZ, ruë Saint Jacques, à Saint Proſper.

M. DC. LXX.

Avec Privilege & Approbation.

The second edition's title page

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Charles K. Paul Translation, 1888
William Finlayson Trotter Translation, 1910

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Blaise Pascal by François II Quesnel, 1691

PREFACE.



THOSE TO WHOM the Life of Pascal and the Story of Port Royal are unknown, must be referred to works treating fully of the subject, since it were impossible to deal with them adequately within the limits of a preface. Sainte-Beuve's great work on Port Royal, especially the second and third volumes, and "Port Royal," by Charles Beard, B.A., London, 1863, may best be consulted by any who require full, lucid, and singularly impartial information.

But for such as, already acquainted with the time and the man, need a recapitulation of the more important facts, or for those who may find an outline map useful of the country they are to study in detail, a few words are here given.

Blaise Pascal was born at Clermont-Ferrand in Auvergne, on June 19, 1623. He sprung from a well-known legal family, many members of which had held lucrative and responsible positions. His father, Etienne Pascal, held the post of intendant, or provincial administrator, in Normandy, where, and at Paris previously, Pascal lived from the age of sixteen to that of twenty-five; almost wholly educated by his father on account of his precarious health. His mother died when he was eight years old. Etienne Pascal was a pious but stern person, and by no means disposed to entertain or allow any undue exaltation in religion, refusing as long as he lived to allow his daughter Jaqueline to take the veil. But he had the usual faiths and superstitions of his time, and believing that his son's ill-health arose from witchcraft, employed the old woman who was supposed to have caused the malady to remove it, by herbs culled before sunrise, and the expiatory death of a cat. This made a great impression on his son, who in the "Thoughts" employs an ingenious argument to prove that wonders wrought by the invocation of the devil are not, in the proper sense of the term, miracles. At any rate the

counter-charm was incomplete, as the child's feeble health remained feeble to the end.

Intellectually, Blaise Pascal grew rapidly to the stature and strength of a giant; his genius showing itself mainly in the direction of mathematics; at the age of fifteen his studies on conic sections were thought worthy to be read before the most scientific men of Paris, and in after years of agonizing pain mathematical research alone was able to calm him, and distract his mind from himself. His actual reading was at all times narrow, and his scholarship was not profound. In 1646, his father, having broken his thigh at Rouen, came under the influence of two members of the Jansenist school of thought at that place, who attended him in his illness, and from that time dated the more serious religious views of the family. Jaqueline was from the first deeply affected by the more rigorous opinions with which she came in contact. Forbidden to enter the cloister, she lived at home as austere a life as though she had been professed, but after her father's death won her brother's reluctant consent to take the veil at Port Royal, and became one of the strictest nuns of that rigid rule.

Blaise Pascal went through a double process of conversion. When the family first fell under Jansenist influence he threw himself so earnestly into the study of theology that he seriously injured his frail health, and being advised to refrain from all intellectual labour, he returned to the world of Paris, where his friends the Duc de Roannez, the Chevalier de Méré and M. Miton were among the best known and most fashionable persons. His father's death put him in possession of a fair fortune, which he used freely, not at all viciously, but with no renunciation of the pleasures of society. There is some evidence of a proposal that he should marry the Duc de Roannez' sister, and no doubt with such a scheme before him he wrote his celebrated "Discours sur les Passions de l'Amour." This, however, resulted only in the conversion of the duke and his sister, the latter of whom for a time, the former for the whole of his life, remained subject to the religious feelings then excited.

In the autumn of 1654, whether after deliverance in a dangerous accident, or from some hidden cause of which nothing can now be even surmised, there came a second sudden conversion from which there was no return. That hour wrought a complete change in Pascal's life; austerity, self-denial, absolute obedience to his spiritual director, boundless alms-giving succeeded to what at most had been a moderate and restrained use of worldly pleasure, and he threw himself into the life, controversy and interests of Port Royal, with all the passion of one who was not only a new convert, but the champion of a society into which those dearest to him had entered even more fully than he. He became, for a time, one of the solitaries of Port Royal before the close of that same year.

The Cistercian Abbey of Port Royal des Champs was situated about eighteen miles from Paris. It had been founded early in the thirteenth century, and would have faded away unremembered but for the grandeur of its closing years. The rule of the community had been greatly relaxed, but it was reformed with extreme rigour by Jaqueline Arnauld, its young abbess, known in religion as La Mère Angélique. The priest chosen as Director of the community was Jean du Vergier de Hauranne, Abbé de St. Cyran, a close friend of Cornelius Jansen, Bishop of Ypres. They had together devoted themselves to the study of Saint Augustine; and the "Augustinus," the work to which Jansen gave his whole life, was planned with the assistance of St. Cyran. Certain propositions drawn from this work were afterwards condemned, and the controversy which raged between the two schools of the Jesuits and the Jansenists divided itself into two parts, first, whether the propositions were heretical, and secondly, whether as a fact they were contained in, or could fairly be deduced from, Jansen's book. The strife, which raged with varying fortunes for many years, need not here detain us.

After the reform of Port Royal, and when the Society, however assailed and in danger, was at the height of its renown, the whole establishment consisted of two convents, the mother house of Port Royal des Champs, and one in Paris to which was attached a school for girls. To Port Royal des Champs, as to a spiritual centre, and to be under the guidance of the three great directors, who in succession ruled

the abbey, M. de St. Cyran, M. Singlin, and M. de Saci, there came men and women, not under monastic vows, but living for a time the monastic or even the eremitical life. The women, for the most part, had rooms in the convent, the men built rooms for themselves hard by, or shared between them La Grange, a farm belonging to the abbey. It need scarcely be said that in so strict a community the sexes were wholly separate; a common worship, and the confidence of the same confessor, together with similarity of views in religion, were the ties which bound together the whole society.

When Pascal formally joined Port Royal, the Abbey and all that was attached to it greatly needed aid from without. A Bull in condemnation of Jansen had been gained from the Pope, and a Formulary, minimising its effect as far as possible, was drawn up by the General Assembly in France, which was ultimately accepted by Port Royal itself. But if the Port Royalists minimized the defeat, and, with great intellectual dexterity, showed that the condemned propositions were not in precise terms what they had held, and were not in Jansen's book, their adversaries exaggerated the victory. A confessor in Paris refused absolution to a parishioner because he had a Jansenist living in his house, and had sent his grand-daughter to school at Port Royal. Antoine Arnauld, known as Le Grand Arnauld, brother of La Mère Angélique, himself in danger of condemnation by the Sorbonne, drew up a statement of the case intended to instruct the public on the points in dispute. On reading this to the Port Royal solitaries before printing it, he saw that it would not do, and turning to Pascal, who had then been a year under M. Singlin's direction, he suggested to him as a younger man with a lighter pen to see what he could do. The next day Pascal produced the first of the "Provincial Letters," or to give it the correct title, "A Letter written to a Provincial by one of his friends." In these Letters Pascal formed his true style, and took rank at once among the great French writers. They contributed largely to turn the scale of feeling against his adversaries; they, and an occurrence in which he saw the visible finger of God, saved Port Royal for a time. But the history of the "Provincial Letters" must be

read elsewhere, as must also in its fulness the miracle of the Holy Thorn, on which a few words are needed.

The “Provincial Letters” were in course of publication, but M. Arnauld had been condemned by the Sorbonne just as the first was issued, and his enemies said he was excommunicated, which was not technically true; he was in danger of arrest, and was in hiding; the solitaries of Port Royal were almost all dispersed; the schools were thinned of their pupils and on the point of closing, the confessors were about to be withdrawn and the nuns sent to various other convents, when the miracle took place. Marguerite Perier, a child of ten years old, daughter of Pascal’s elder sister, was one of the pupils at Port Royal in Paris, not as yet dismissed to her home. She was tenderly nursed by the nuns for an ulcer in the lachrymal gland, which had destroyed the bones of the nose, and produced other horrors of which there is no need to speak. A relic of the Saviour, one of the thorns of his crown of mockery, which had been intrusted to the nuns, was specially venerated during a service in its honour, and as it would seem was passed from hand to hand in its reliquary. When the turn of the scholars came, Sister Flavia, their mistress, moved by a sudden impulse said, “My child, pray for your eye,” and touched the ulcer with the reliquary. The child was cured, and the effect on the community was immediate. The remaining solitaries were not dispersed, some of those who had gone returned, the confessors were not removed, the school was not closed, and Port Royal was respited.

The miracle was to Pascal at once a solemn matter of religion and a family occurrence; he took henceforward as his cognizance an eye encircled with a crown of thorns and the motto *Scio cui credidi*, he jotted down various thoughts on the miracle, and the manner in which as it seemed to him God had by it given as by “a voice of thunder” his judgment in favour of Port Royal, and he sketched a plan of a work against atheists and unbelievers. In the year between the spring of 1657, and that of 1658, the last year of his good health, if that can be called good which was at best but feeble, he indicated the plan, and wrote the most finished paragraphs of his intended work. The detached thoughts which make up

the bulk of it were scribbled, as they occurred to him during the last four years of his life, on scraps of paper, or on the margin of what he had already written, often when he was quite incapable of sustained employment. Many were dictated, some to friends, and some to a servant who constantly attended him in his illness.

Towards the end of his life he was obliged to move into Paris again, where he was carefully nursed by his sister Madame Perrier, to whose house he was moved at the last, where he died on August 9th, 1662, at the age of thirty-nine, having spent his last years in an ecstasy of self-denial, of charity, and of aspiration after God.

Not for six years after his death were his family and friends able to consider in what form his unfinished work should be given to the world. Then Port Royal had a breathing space, what was known as the Peace of the Church was established by Clement IX., and it was considered that the time had come to set in order these precious fragments. The duty of giving an author's works to the world as he left them was little understood in those days, and the Duc de Roannez even suggested that Pascal's whole work should be re-written on the lines he had laid down. Some editing was, on all hands, allowed to be needful; thus the arrangement of chapters, and the fragments to be included in chapters, were matter for fair discussion. But the committee of editors went further, and even when the text had been settled by them, it had to undergo a further censorship by various theologians. Finally, in January, 1670, the "Pensées" appeared as a small duodecimo, with a preface by the Perrier family, and no mention of Port Royal in the volume.

For a full account of this and other editions, the reader must be referred to the preface to M. Molinier's edition, Paris, 1877-1879, and to that of M. Faugère, Paris, 1844.

M. Victor Cousin was the first to draw attention to the need of a new edition of Pascal in 1842. He showed that great liberties had been taken with and suppressions made in the text, and the labour to which he invited was first

undertaken by M. Prosper Faugère. M. Havet adopting his text departed from his arrangement, reverted in great measure to that of the old editors, and accompanied the whole by an excellent commentary and notes, 2nd edition, Paris, 1866. M. Molinier has again consulted the MSS. word for word, and while in a degree following M. Faugère's arrangement has yet been guided by his own skill and judgment. It must always be remembered that each editor must necessarily follow his own judgment in regard to the position he should give to fragments not placed by the writer. But provided that an editor makes no changes merely for the sake of change and that he loyally enters into the spirit of his predecessors, each new comer, till the arrangement is finally fixed, has a great advantage. Such an editor is M. Molinier, and in his arrangement the text of Pascal would seem to be mainly if not wholly fixed; so that for the first time we have not only Pascal's "Thoughts," but we have them approximately arranged as he designed to present them to his readers.

The course of an English translator is clear; his responsibility is confined to deciding which text to follow, he has no right to make one for himself. In the present edition, therefore, M. Molinier's text and arrangement are scrupulously followed except in two places. In regard to one, M. Molinier has himself adopted a different reading in his notes made after the text was printed, the second is an obvious misprint. Pascal's "Profession of Faith," or "Amulet," is transferred from the place it occupies in M. Molinier's edition to serve as an introduction to the work, striking as it does the key-note to the "Thoughts."

Pascal's quotations from the Bible were made of course from the Vulgate, but very often indeed from memory, and incorrectly, while he often gave the substance alone of the passage he used. No one version of the Bible therefore has been used exclusively, but the Authorised Version and the Douai or Rheims versions have been used as each in turn most nearly afforded the equivalent of the quotations made by Pascal.

The notes are mainly based on those of MM. Faugère, Havet, and Molinier.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION.



PASCAL'S PROFESSION OF FAITH.



This year of Grace 1654,

Monday, November 23rd, day of Saint Clement, pope

and martyr, and others in the martyrology,

Eve of Saint Chrysogonus, martyr, and others;

From about half past ten at night, to

about half after midnight,

Fire.

God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob,

Not of the philosophers and the wise.

Security, security. Feeling, joy, peace.

God of Jesus Christ

Deum meum et Deum vestrum.

Thy God shall be my God.

Forgetfulness of the world and of all save God.

He can be found only in the ways taught

in the Gospel.

Greatness of the human soul.

O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee,

but I have known thee.

Joy, joy, joy, tears of joy.

I have separated myself from him.

Dereliquerunt me fontem aqua vivæ.

My God, why hast thou forsaken me?...

That I be not separated from thee eternally.

This is life eternal: That they might know thee

the only true God, and him whom thou hast sent, Jesus Christ,

Jesus Christ,

Jesus Christ.

I have separated myself from him; I have fled, renounced, crucified him.

May I never be separated from him.

He maintains himself in me only in the ways taught

in the Gospel.

Renunciation total and sweet.

etc.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION.



LET THEM AT least learn what is the Religion they assail, before they assail it. If this religion claimed to have a clear view of God, and to possess it openly and unveiled, then to say that we see nothing in the world which manifests him with this clearness would be to assail it. But since on the contrary it affirms that men are in darkness and estranged from God, that he has hidden himself from their knowledge, that the very name he has given himself in the Scriptures is *Deus absconditus*; and if indeed it aims equally at establishing these two points, that God has set in the Church evident notes to enable those who seek him in sincerity to recognise him, and that he has nevertheless so concealed them that he can only be perceived by those who seek him with their whole hearts; what advantages it them, when, in their professed neglect of the search after truth, they declare that nothing reveals it to them? For the very obscurity in which they are, and for which they blame the Church, does but establish one of the points which she maintains, without affecting the other, and far from destroying, establishes her doctrine.

In order to assail it they ought to urge that they have sought everywhere with all their strength, and even in that which the Church proposes for their instruction, but without avail. Did they thus speak, they would indeed assail one of her claims. But I hope here to show that no rational person can thus speak, and I am even bold to say that no one has ever done so. We know well enough how men of this temper behave. They believe they have made great efforts for their instruction, when they have spent a few hours in reading some book of Scripture, and have talked with some Ecclesiastic on the truths of the faith. Whereupon they boast that they have in vain consulted books and men. But indeed I will tell them what I have often said, that such carelessness is intolerable. We are not here

dealing with the light interest of a stranger, that we should thus treat it; but with that which concerns ourselves and our all.

The immortality of the soul is a matter of so great moment to us, it touches us so deeply, that we must have lost all feeling if we are careless of the truth about it. Our every action and our every thought must take such different courses, according as there are or are not eternal blessings for which to hope, that it is impossible to take a single step with sense or judgment, save in view of that point which ought to be our end and aim.

Thus our first interest and our first duty is to gain light on this subject, whereon our whole conduct depends. Therefore among unbelievers, I make a vast difference between those who labour with all their power to gain instruction, and those who live without taking trouble or thought for it.

I can have nothing but compassion for all who sincerely lament their doubt, who look upon it as the worst of evils, and who, sparing no pains to escape it, find in that endeavour their principal and most serious occupation.

But as for those who pass their life without thought of the ultimate goal of life, who, solely because they do not find within themselves the light of conviction, neglect to seek it elsewhere and to examine thoroughly whether the opinion in question be among those which are popularly received with credulous simplicity, or among those which, although in themselves obscure, have yet a solid and indestructible basis, — of those, I say, my thoughts are very different.

This neglect of a matter in which themselves are concerned, their eternity, and their all, makes me angry rather than compassionate; it astonishes and terrifies me, it is to me something monstrous. I do not say this out of the pious zeal of a spiritual devotion. I mean on the contrary that such a feeling should spring from principles of human interest and self-love; and for this we need see no more than what is seen by the least enlightened persons.

We need no great elevation of soul to understand that here is no true and solid satisfaction, that all our pleasures are but vanity, our evils infinite, and lastly that

death, which threatens us every moment, must infallibly and within a few years place us in the dread alternative of being for ever either annihilated or wretched.

Nothing is more real than this, nothing more terrible. Brave it out as we may, that is yet the end which awaits the fairest life in the world. Let us reflect on this, and then say if it be not certain that there is no good in this life save in the hope of another, that we are happy only in proportion as we approach it, and that as there is no more sorrow for those who have an entire assurance of eternity, so there is no happiness for those who have not a ray of its light.

Assuredly then it is a great evil thus to be in doubt, but it is at least an indispensable duty to seek when we are in such doubt; he therefore who doubts and yet seeks not is at once thoroughly unhappy and thoroughly unfair. And if at the same time he be easy and content, profess to be so, and in fact pride himself thereon; if even it be this very condition of doubt which forms the subject of his joy and boasting, I have no terms in which to describe a creature so extravagant.

Whence come such feelings? What delight can we find in the expectation of nothing but unavailing misery? What cause of boasting that we are in impenetrable darkness? How can such an argument as the following occur to a reasoning man?

“I know not who has sent me into the world, nor what the world is, nor what I myself am; I am terribly ignorant of every thing; I know not what my body is, nor my senses, nor my soul, nor even that part of me which thinks what I say, which reflects on all and on itself, yet is as ignorant of itself as of all beside. I see those dreadful spaces of the universe which close me in, and I find myself fixed in one corner of this vast expanse, without knowing why I am set in this place rather than elsewhere, nor why this moment of time given me for life is assigned to this point rather than another of the whole Eternity which was before me or which shall be after me. I see nothing but infinities on every side, which close me round as an atom, and as a shadow which endures but for an instant and returns no more. I know only that I must shortly die, but what I know the least is this very death which I cannot avoid.

“As I know not whence I come, so I know not whither I go; only this I know, that on departing this world, I shall either fall for ever into nothingness, or into the hands of an offended God, without knowing which of these two conditions shall eternally be my lot. Such is my state, full of weakness and uncertainty; from all which I conclude that I ought to pass all the days of my life without thought of searching for what must happen to me. Perhaps I might find some ray of light in my doubts, but I will not take the trouble, nor stir a foot to seek it; and after treating with scorn those who are troubled with this care, I will go without foresight and without fear to make trial of the grand event, and allow myself to be led softly on to death, uncertain of the eternity of my future condition.”

Who would wish to have for his friend a man who should thus speak; who would choose him rather than another for advice in business; who would turn to him in sorrow? And indeed to what use in life could we put him?

In truth, it is the glory of Religion to have for enemies men so unreasoning, whose opposition is so little dangerous to her, that it the rather serves to establish her truths. For the Christian faith goes mainly to the establishment of these two points, the corruption of nature, and the Redemption by Jesus Christ. Now I maintain that if these men serve not to demonstrate the truth of Redemption by the holiness of their morals, they at least serve admirably to show the corruption of nature by sentiments so unnatural.

Nothing is so important to man as his condition, nothing so formidable to him as eternity; and thus it is not natural there should be men indifferent to the loss of their being, and to the peril of an endless woe. They are quite other men in regard to all else; they fear the veriest trifles, they foresee them, they feel them; and the very man who spends so many days and nights in rage and despair for the loss of office or for some imaginary insult to his honour, is the same who, without disquiet and without emotion, knows that he must lose all by death. It is a monstrous thing to see in one and the same heart and at the same time this sensibility to the meanest, and this strange insensibility to the greatest matters. It

is an incomprehensible spell, a supernatural drowsiness, which denotes as its cause an all powerful force.

There must be a strange revolution in the nature of man, before he can glory at being in a state to which it seems incredible that any should attain. Experience however has shown me a large number of such men, a surprising fact did we not know that the greater part of those who meddle with the matter are not as a fact what they declare themselves. They are people who have been told that the manners of good society consist in such daring. This they call shaking off the yoke, this they try to imitate. Yet it would not be difficult to convince them how much they deceive themselves in thus seeking esteem. Not so is it acquired, even among those men of the world who judge wisely, and who know that the only way of worldly success is to show ourselves honourable, faithful, of sound judgment, and capable of useful service to a friend; because by nature men love only what may prove useful to them. Now in what way does it advantage us to hear a man say he has at last shaken off the yoke, that he does not believe there is a God who watches his actions, that he considers himself the sole master of his conduct and accountable for it only to himself. Does he think that thus he has brought us to have henceforward confidence in him, and to look to him for comfort, counsel and succour in every need of life? Do they think to delight us when they declare that they hold our soul to be but a little wind or smoke, nay, when they tell us so in a tone of proud content? Is this a thing to assert gaily, and not rather to say sadly as the saddest thing in all the world?

Did they think on it seriously, they would see that this is so great a mistake, so contrary to good sense, so opposed to honourable conduct, so remote in every respect from that good breeding at which they aim, that they would choose rather to restore than to corrupt those who might have any inclination to follow them. And indeed if they are obliged to give an account of their opinions, and of the reasons they have for doubts about Religion, they will say things so weak and base, as rather to persuade the contrary. It was once happily said to such an one, “If you continue to talk thus you will really make me a Christian.” And the

speaker was right, for who would not be horrified at entertaining opinions in which he would have such despicable persons as his associates!

Thus those who only feign these opinions would be very unhappy were they to put force on their natural disposition in order to make themselves the most inconsequent of men. If, in their inmost hearts, they are troubled at their lack of light, let them not dissemble: the avowal will bring no shame; the only shame is to be shameless. Nothing betrays so much weakness of mind as not to apprehend the misfortune of a man without God, nothing is so sure a token of an evil disposition of heart as not to desire the truth of eternal promises, nothing is more cowardly than to fight against God. Let them therefore leave these impieties to persons who are so ill-bred as to be really capable of them, let them at least be men of honour if they cannot be Christians, and lastly, let them recognise that there are but two classes of men who can be called reasonable; those who serve God with their whole heart because they know him, or those who seek him with their whole heart because they know him not.

But as for those who live without knowing him and without seeking him, they judge themselves to deserve their own care so little, that they are not worthy the care of others, and it needs all the charity of the Religion they despise, not to despise them so utterly as to abandon them to their madness. But since this Religion obliges us to look on them, while they are in this life, as always capable of illuminating grace, and to believe that in a short while they may be more full of faith than ourselves, while we on the other hand may fall into the blindness which now is theirs, we ought to do for them what we would they should do for us were we in their place, and to entreat them to take pity on themselves and advance at least a few steps, if perchance they may find the light. Let them give to reading these words a few of the hours which otherwise they spend so unprofitably: with whatever aversion they set about it they may perhaps gain something; at least they cannot be great losers. But if any bring to the task perfect sincerity and a true desire to meet with truth, I despair not of their satisfaction, nor of their being

convinced of so divine a Religion by the proofs which I have here gathered up, and have set forth in somewhat the following order....

Before entering upon the proofs of the Christian Religion, I find it necessary to set forth the unfairness of men who live indifferent to the search for truth in a matter which is so important to them, and which touches them so nearly.

Among all their errors this doubtless is the one which most proves them to be fools and blind, and in which it is most easy to confound them by the first gleam of common sense, and by our natural feelings.

For it is not to be doubted that this life endures but for an instant, that the state of death is eternal, whatever may be its nature, and that thus all our actions and all our thoughts must take such different courses according to the state of that eternity, as to render it impossible to take a single step with sense and judgment, save in view of that point which ought to be our end and aim.

Nothing is more clear than this, and therefore by all principles of reason the conduct of men is most unreasonable if they do not alter their course. Hence we may judge concerning those who live without thinking of the ultimate goal of life, who allow themselves to be guided by their inclinations and their pleasures without thought or disquiet, and, as if they could annihilate eternity by turning their minds from it, consider only how they may make themselves happy for the moment.

Yet this eternity exists; and death the gate of eternity, which threatens them every hour, must in a short while infallibly reduce them to the dread necessity of being through eternity either nothing or miserable, without knowing which of these eternities is for ever prepared for them.

This is a doubt which has terrible consequences. They are in danger of an eternity of misery, and thereupon, as if the matter were not worth the trouble, they care not to examine whether this is one of those opinions which men in general receive with a too credulous facility, or among those which, themselves obscure, have yet a solid though concealed foundation. Thus they know not whether the matter be true or false, nor if the proofs be strong or weak. They have them before

their eyes, they refuse to look at them, and in that ignorance they choose to do all that will bring them into this misfortune if it exist, to wait for death to verify it, and to be in the meantime thoroughly satisfied with their state, openly avowing and even making boast of it. Can we think seriously on the importance of this matter without being revolted at conduct so extravagant?

Such rest in ignorance is a monstrous thing, and they who live in it ought to be made aware of its extravagance and stupidity, by having it revealed to them, that they may be confounded by the sight of their own folly. For this is how men reason when they choose to live ignorant of what they are and do not seek to be enlightened. “I know not,” say they....

THE MISERY OF MAN WITHOUT GOD; OR, THAT NATURE IS NATURALLY CORRUPT.



PREFACE TO THE FIRST PART.



TO SPEAK OF those who have treated of the knowledge of self, of the divisions of Charron which sadden and weary us, of the confusion of Montaigne; that he was aware he had no definite system, and tried to evade the difficulty by leaping from subject to subject; that he sought to be fashionable.

His foolish project of self-description, and this not casually and against his maxims, since everybody may make mistakes, but by his maxims themselves, and by his main and principal design. For to say foolish things by chance and weakness is an ordinary evil, but to say them designedly is unbearable, and to say of such that....

Montaigne. — Montaigne's defects are great. Lewd expressions. This is bad, whatever Mademoiselle de Gournay may say. He is credulous, *people without eyes*; ignorant, *squaring the circle, a greater world*. His opinions on suicide and on death. He suggests a carelessness about salvation, *without fear and without repentance*. Since his book was not written with a religious intent, it was not his duty to speak of religion; but it is always a duty not to turn men from it. We may excuse his somewhat lax and licentious opinions on some relations of life, but not his thoroughly pagan opinions on death, for a man must give over piety altogether, if he does not at least wish to die like a Christian. Now through the whole of his book he looks forward to nothing but a soft and indolent death.

What good there is in Montaigne can only have been acquired with difficulty. What is evil in him, I mean apart from his morality, could have been corrected in a moment, if any one had told him he was too prolix and too egoistical.

Not in Montaigne, but in myself, I find all that I see in him.

Let no one say I have said nothing new, the disposition of my matter is new. In playing tennis, two men play with the same ball, but one places it better.

It might as truly be said that my words have been used before. And if the same thoughts in a different arrangement do not form a different discourse, so neither do the same words in a different arrangement form different thoughts.

MAN'S DISPROPORTION.



THIS IS WHERE our intuitive knowledge leads us. If it be not true, there is no truth in man; and if it be, he finds therein a great reason for humiliation, because he must abase himself in one way or another. And since he cannot exist without such knowledge, I wish that before entering on deeper researches into nature he would consider her seriously and at leisure, that he would examine himself also, and knowing what proportion there is.... Let man then contemplate the whole realm of nature in its full and exalted majesty, and turn his eyes from the low objects which hem him round; let him observe that brilliant light set like an eternal lamp to illumine the universe, let the earth appear to him a point in comparison with the vast circle described by that sun, and let him see with amazement that even this vast circle is itself but a fine point in regard to that described by the stars revolving in the firmament. If our view be arrested there, let imagination pass beyond, and it will sooner exhaust the power of thinking than nature that of giving scope for thought. The whole visible world is but an imperceptible speck in the ample bosom of nature. No idea approaches it. We may swell our conceptions beyond all imaginable space, yet bring forth only atoms in comparison with the reality of things. It is an infinite sphere, the centre of which is every where, the circumference no where. It is, in short, the greatest sensible mark of the almighty power of God, in that thought let imagination lose itself.

Then, returning to himself, let man consider his own being compared with all that is; let him regard himself as wandering in this remote province of nature; and from the little dungeon in which he finds himself lodged, I mean the universe, let him learn to set a true value on the earth, on its kingdoms, its cities, and on himself.

What is a man in the infinite? But to show him another prodigy no less astonishing, let him examine the most delicate things he knows. Let him take a mite which in its minute body presents him with parts incomparably more minute; limbs with their joints, veins in the limbs, blood in the veins, humours in the blood, drops in the humours, vapours in the drops; let him, again dividing these last, exhaust his power of thought; let the last point at which he arrives be that of which we speak, and he will perhaps think that here is the extremest diminutive in nature. Then I will open before him therein a new abyss. I will paint for him not only the visible universe, but all that he can conceive of nature's immensity in the enclosure of this diminished atom. Let him therein see an infinity of universes of which each has its firmament, its planets, its earth, in the same proportion as in the visible world; in each earth animals, and at the last the mites, in which he will come upon all that was in the first, and still find in these others the same without end and without cessation; let him lose himself in wonders as astonishing in their minuteness as the others in their immensity; for who will not be amazed at seeing that our body, which before was imperceptible in the universe, itself imperceptible in the bosom of the whole, is now a colossus, a world, a whole, in regard to the nothingness to which we cannot attain.

Whoso takes this survey of himself will be terrified at the thought that he is upheld in the material being, given him by nature, between these two abysses of the infinite and nothing, he will tremble at the sight of these marvels; and I think that as his curiosity changes into wonder, he will be more disposed to contemplate them in silence than to search into them with presumption.

For after all what is man in nature? A nothing in regard to the infinite, a whole in regard to nothing, a mean between nothing and the whole; infinitely removed from understanding either extreme. The end of things and their beginnings are invincibly hidden from him in impenetrable secrecy, he is equally incapable of seeing the nothing whence he was taken, and the infinite in which he is engulfed.

What shall he do then, but discern somewhat of the middle of things in an eternal despair of knowing either their beginning or their end? All things arise

from nothing, and tend towards the infinite. Who can follow their marvellous course? The author of these wonders can understand them, and none but he.

Of these two infinites in nature, the infinitely great and the infinitely little, man can more easily conceive the great.

Because they have not considered these infinities, men have rashly plunged into the research of nature, as though they bore some proportion to her.

It is strange that they have wished to understand the origin of all that is, and thence to attain to the knowledge of the whole, with a presumption as infinite as their object. For there is no doubt that such a design cannot be formed without presumption or without a capacity as infinite as nature.

If we are well informed, we understand that nature having graven her own image and that of her author on all things, they are almost all partakers of her double infinity. Thus we see that all the sciences are infinite in the extent of their researches, for none can doubt that geometry, for instance, has an infinite infinity of problems to propose. They are also infinite in the number and in the nicety of their premisses, for it is evident that those which are finally proposed are not self-supporting, but are based on others, which again having others as their support have no finality.

But we make some apparently final to the reason, just as in regard to material things we call that an indivisible point beyond which our senses can no longer perceive any thing, though by its nature this also is infinitely divisible.

Of these two scientific infinities, that of greatness is the most obvious to the senses, and therefore few persons have made pretensions to universal knowledge. “I will discourse of the all,” said Democritus.

But beyond the fact that it is a small thing to speak of it simply, without proving and knowing, it is nevertheless impossible to do so, the infinite multitude of things being so hidden, that all we can express by word or thought is but an invisible trace of them. Hence it is plain how foolish, vain, and ignorant is that title of some books: *De omni scibili*.

But the infinitely little is far less evident. Philosophers have much more frequently asserted they have attained it, yet in that very point they have all stumbled. This has given occasion to such common titles as *The Origin of Creation*, *The Principles of Philosophy*, and the like, as presumptuous in fact though not in appearance as that dazzling one, *De omni scibili*.

We naturally think that we can more easily reach the centre of things than embrace their circumference. The visible bulk of the world visibly exceeds us, but as we exceed little things, we think ourselves more capable of possessing them. Yet we need no less capacity to attain the nothing than the whole. Infinite capacity is needed for both, and it seems to me that whoever shall have understood the ultimate principles of existence might also attain to the knowledge of the infinite. The one depends on the other, and one leads to the other. Extremes meet and reunite by virtue of their distance, to find each other in God, and in God alone.

Let us then know our limits; we are something, but we are not all. What existence we have conceals from us the knowledge of first principles which spring from the nothing, while the pettiness of that existence hides from us the sight of the infinite.

In the order of intelligible things our intelligence holds the same position as our body holds in the vast extent of nature.

Restricted in every way, this middle state between two extremes is common to all our weaknesses.

Our senses can perceive no extreme. Too much noise deafens us, excess of light blinds us, too great distance or nearness equally interfere with our vision, prolixity or brevity equally obscure a discourse, too much truth overwhelms us. I know even those who cannot understand that if four be taken from nothing nothing remains. First principles are too plain for us, superfluous pleasure troubles us. Too many concords are unpleasing in music, and too many benefits annoy, we wish to have wherewithal to overpay our debt. *Beneficia eo usque læta sunt dum videntur exsolvi posse; ubi multum antevenere, pro gratia odium redditur.*

We feel neither extreme heat nor extreme cold. Qualities in excess are inimical to us and not apparent to the senses, we do not feel but are passive under them. The weakness of youth and age equally hinder the mind, as also too much and too little teaching....

In a word, all extremes are for us as though they were not; and we are not, in regard to them: they escape us, or we them.

This is our true state; this is what renders us incapable both of certain knowledge and of absolute ignorance. We sail on a vast expanse, ever uncertain, ever drifting, hurried from one to the other goal. If we think to attach ourselves firmly to any point, it totters and fails us; if we follow, it eludes our grasp, and flies from us, vanishing for ever. Nothing stays for us. This is our natural condition, yet always the most contrary to our inclination; we burn with desire to find a steadfast place and an ultimate fixed basis whereon we may build a tower to reach the infinite. But our whole foundation breaks up, and earth opens to the abysses.

We may not then look for certainty or stability. Our reason is always deceived by changing shows, nothing can fix the finite between the two infinites, which at once enclose and fly from it.

If this be once well understood I think that we shall rest, each in the state wherein nature has placed him. This element which falls to us as our lot being always distant from either extreme, it matters not that a man should have a trifle more knowledge of the universe. If he has it, he but begins a little higher. He is always infinitely distant from the end, and the duration of our life is infinitely removed from eternity, even if it last ten years longer.

In regard to these infinites all finites are equal, and I see not why we should fix our imagination on one more than on another. The only comparison which we can make of ourselves to the finite troubles us.

Were man to begin with the study of himself, he would see how incapable he is of proceeding further. How can a part know the whole? But he may perhaps aspire to know at least the parts with which he has proportionate relation. But the

parts of the world are so linked and related, that I think it impossible to know one without another, or without the whole.

Man, for instance, is related to all that he knows. He needs place wherein to abide, time through which to exist, motion in order to live; he needs constituent elements, warmth and food to nourish him, air to breathe. He sees light, he feels bodies, he contracts an alliance with all that is.

To know man then it is necessary to understand how it comes that he needs air to breathe, and to know the air we must understand how it has relation to the life of man, etc.

Flame cannot exist without air, therefore to know one, we must know the other.

All that exists then is both cause and effect, dependent and supporting, mediate and immediate, and all is held together by a natural though imperceptible bond, which unites things most distant and most different. I hold it impossible to know the parts without knowing the whole, or to know the whole without knowing the parts in detail.

I hold it impossible to know one alone without all the others, that is to say impossible purely and absolutely.

The eternity of things in themselves or in God must also confound our brief duration. The fixed and constant immobility of Nature in comparison with the continual changes which take place in us must have the same effect.

And what completes our inability to know things is that they are in their essence simple, whereas we are composed of two opposite natures differing in kind, soul and body. For it is impossible that our reasoning part should be other than spiritual; and should any allege that we are simply material, this would far more exclude us from the knowledge of things, since it is an inconceivable paradox to affirm that matter can know itself, and it is not possible for us to know how it should know itself.

So, were we simply material, we could know nothing whatever, and if we are composed of spirit and matter we cannot perfectly know what is simple, whether it be spiritual or material. For how should we know matter distinctly, since our

being, which acts on this knowledge, is partly spiritual, and how should we know spiritual substances clearly since we have a body which weights us, and drags us down to earth.

Moreover what completes our inability is the simplicity of things compared with our double and complex nature. To dispute this point were an invincible absurdity, for it is as absurd as impious to deny that man is composed of two parts, differing in their nature, soul and body. This renders us unable to know all things; for if this complexity be denied, and it be asserted that we are entirely material, it is plain that matter is incapable of knowing matter. Nothing is more impossible than this.

Let us conceive then that this mixture of spirit and clay throws us out of proportion....

Hence it comes that almost all philosophers have confounded different ideas, and speak of material things in spiritual phrase, and of spiritual things in material phrase. For they say boldly that bodies have a tendency to fall, that they seek after their centre, that they fly from destruction, that they fear a void, that they have inclinations, sympathies, antipathies; and all of these are spiritual qualities. Again, in speaking of spirits, they conceive of them as in a given spot, or as moving from place to place; qualities which belong to matter alone.

Instead of receiving the ideas of these things simply, we colour them with our own qualities, and stamp with our complex being all the simple things which we contemplate.

Who would not think, when we declare that all that is consists of mind and matter, that we really understood this combination? Yet it is the one thing we least understand. Man is to himself the most marvellous object in Nature, for he cannot conceive what matter is, still less what is mind, and less than all how a material body should be united to a mind. This is the crown of all his difficulties, yet it is his very being: *Modus quo corporibus adhæret spiritus comprehendi ab homine non potest et hoc tamen homo est*.

These are some of the causes which render man so totally unable to know nature. For nature has a twofold infinity, he is finite and limited. Nature is permanent, and continues in one stay; he is fleeting and mortal. All things fail and change each instant, he sees them only as they pass, they have their beginning and end, he conceives neither the one nor the other. They are simple, he is composed of two different natures. And to complete the proof of our weakness, I will finish by this reflection on our natural condition. In a word, to complete the proof of our weakness, I will end with these two considerations....

The nature of man may be considered in two ways, one according to its end, and then it is great and incomparable; the other according to popular opinion, as we judge of the nature of a horse or a dog, by popular opinion which discerns in it the power of speed, *et animum arcendi*; and then man is abject and vile. These are the two ways which make us judge of it so differently and which cause such disputes among philosophers.

For one denies the supposition of the other; one says, *He was not born for such an end, for all his actions are repugnant to it*; the other says, *He cannot gain his end when he commits base deeds*.

Two things instruct man about his whole nature, instinct and experience.

Inconstancy. — We think we are playing on ordinary organs when we play upon man. Men are organs indeed, but fantastic, changeable, and various, with pipes not arranged in due succession. Those who understand only how to play upon ordinary organs make no harmonies on these. We should know where are the....

Nature. — Nature has placed us so truly in the centre, that if we alter one side of the balance we alter also the other. This makes me believe that there is a mechanism in our brain, so adjusted, that who touches one touches also the contrary spring.

Lustravit lampade terras. — The weather and my moods have little in common. I have my foggy and my fine days within me, whether my affairs go well or ill has little to do with the matter. I sometimes strive against my luck, the glory of subduing it makes me subdue it gaily, whereas I am sometimes wearied in the midst of my good luck.

It is difficult to submit anything to the judgment of a second person without prejudicing him by the way in which we submit it. If we say, "I think it beautiful, I think it obscure," or the like, we either draw the imagination to that opinion, or irritate it to form the contrary. It is better to say nothing, so that the other may judge according to what really is, that is to say, as it then is, and according as the other circumstances which are not of our making have placed it. We at least shall have added nothing of our own, except that silence produces an effect, according to the turn and the interpretation which the other is inclined to give it, or as he may conjecture it, from gestures or countenance, or from the tone of voice, if he be a physiognomist; so difficult is it not to oust the judgment from its natural seat, or rather so rarely is it firm and stable!

The spirit of this sovereign judge of the world is not so independent but that it is liable to be troubled by the first disturbance about him. The noise of a cannon is not needed to break his train of thought, it need only be the creaking of a weathercock or a pulley. Do not be astonished if at this moment he argues incoherently, a fly is buzzing about his ears, and that is enough to render him incapable of sound judgment. Would you have him arrive at truth, drive away that creature which holds his reason in check, and troubles that powerful intellect which gives laws to towns and kingdoms. Here is a droll kind of god! *O ridicolosissimo eroe!*

The power of flies, which win battles, hinder our soul from action, devour our body.

When we are too young our judgment is at fault, so also when we are too old.

If we take not thought enough, or too much, on any matter, we are obstinate and infatuated.

He that considers his work so soon as it leaves his hands, is prejudiced in its favour, he that delays his survey too long, cannot regain the spirit of it.

So with pictures seen from too near or too far; there is but one precise point from which to look at them, all others are too near or too far, too high or too low. Perspective determines that precise point in the art of painting. But who shall determine it in truth or morals?

When I consider the short duration of my life, swallowed up in the eternity before and after, the small space which I fill, or even can see, engulfed in the infinite immensity of spaces whereof I know nothing, and which know nothing of me, I am terrified, and wonder that I am here rather than there, for there is no reason why here rather than there, or now rather than then. Who has set me here? By whose order and design have this place and time been destined for me? — *Memoria hospitis unius diei prætereuntis*.

It is not well to be too much at liberty. It is not well to have all we want.

How many kingdoms know nothing of us!

The eternal silence of these infinite spaces alarms me.

Nothing more astonishes me than to see that men are not astonished at their own weakness. They act seriously, and every one follows his own mode of life, not because it is, as a fact, good to follow, being the custom, but as if each man knew certainly where are reason and justice. They find themselves constantly

deceived, and by an amusing humility always imagine that the fault is in themselves, and not in the art which all profess to understand. But it is well there are so many of this kind of people in the world, who are not sceptics for the glory of scepticism, to show that man is thoroughly capable of the most extravagant opinions, because he is capable of believing that his weakness is not natural and inevitable, but that, on the contrary, his wisdom comes by nature.

Nothing fortifies scepticism more than that there are some who are not sceptics. If all were so, they would be wrong.

Two infinites, a mean. If we read too quickly or too slowly, we understand nothing.

Too much and too little wine. Give a man none, he cannot find truth, give him too much, the same.

Chance gives thoughts, and chance takes them away; there is no art for keeping or gaining them.

A thought has escaped me. I would write it down. I write instead, that it has escaped me.

In writing down my thought it now and then escapes me, but this reminds me of my weakness, which I constantly forget. This teaches me as much as my forgotten thought, for my whole study is to know my nothingness.

Are men so strong, as to be insensible to all which affects them? Let us try them in the loss of goods or honour. Ah! the charm is worked.

To fear death out of danger, and not in danger, for we must be men.

Sudden death is the only thing to fear, therefore confessors live in the houses of the great.

We know ourselves so little, that many think themselves near death when they are perfectly well, and many think themselves well when they are near death, since they do not feel the fever at hand, or the abscess about to form.

Why is my knowledge so restricted, or my height, or my life to a hundred years rather than to a thousand? What was nature's reason for giving me such length of days, and for choosing this number rather than another, in that infinity where there is no reason to choose one more than another, since none is preferable to another?

The nature of man is not always to go forward, it has its advances and retreats.

Fever has its hot and cold fits, and the cold proves as well as the hot how great is the force of the fever.

The inventions of men from age to age follow the same plan. It is the same with the goodness and the wickedness of the world in general.

Plerumque gratæ principibus vices.

The strength of a man's virtue must not be measured by his occasional efforts, but by his ordinary life.

Those great spiritual efforts to which the soul sometimes attains are things on which it takes no permanent hold. It leaps to them, not as to a throne, for ever, but only for an instant.

I do not admire the excess of a virtue as of valour, unless I see at the same time the excess of the opposite virtue, as in Epaminondas, who had exceeding valour and exceeding humanity, for otherwise we do not rise, but fall. Grandeur is not shown by being at one extremity, but in touching both at once, and filling the

whole space between. But perhaps this is only a sudden motion of the soul from one to the other extreme, and in fact it is always at one point only, as when a firebrand is whirled. Be it so, but at least this marks the agility if not the magnitude of the soul.

We do not remain virtuous by our own power, but by the counterpoise of two opposite vices, we remain standing as between two contrary winds; take away one of these vices, we fall into the other.

When we would pursue the virtues to their extremes on either side, vices present themselves, which insinuate themselves insensibly there, in their insensible course towards the infinitely great, so that we lose ourselves in vices, and no longer see virtues.

It is not shameful to man to yield to pain, and it is shameful to yield to pleasure. This is not because pain comes from without us, while we seek pleasure, for we may seek pain, and yield to it willingly without this kind of baseness. How comes it then that reason finds it glorious in us to yield under the assaults of pain, and shameful to yield under the assaults of pleasure? It is because pain does not tempt and attract us. We ourselves choose it voluntarily, and will that it have dominion over us. We are thus masters of the situation, and so far man yields to himself, but in pleasure man yields to pleasure. Now only mastery and empire bring glory, and only slavery causes shame.

All things may prove fatal to us, even those made to serve us, as in nature walls may kill us and stairs may kill us, if we walk not aright.

The slightest movement affects all nature, the whole sea changes because of a rock. Thus in grace, the most trifling action has effect on everything by its consequences; therefore everything is important.

Provided we know each man's ruling passion we are sure of pleasing him; yet each man has his fancies, contrary to his real good, even in the very idea he forms of good; a strange fact which puts all out of tune.

When our passions lead us to any act we forget our duty. If we like a book we read it, when we should be doing something else. But as a reminder we ought to propose to ourselves to do something distasteful; we then excuse ourselves that we have something else to do, and thus remember our duty.

Sneezing absorbs all the faculties of the soul, as do certain bodily functions, but we do not draw therefrom the same conclusions against the greatness of man, because it is against his will. And if we make ourselves sneeze we do so against our will. It is not in view of the act itself, but for another end, and so it is not a mark of the weakness of man, and of his slavery to that act.

Scaramouch, who thinks of one thing only.

The doctor, who speaks for a quarter of an hour after he has said all he has to say, so full is he of the desire of talking.

The parrot's beak, which he dries though it is clean already.

The sense of falseness in present pleasures, and our ignorance of the vanity of absent pleasures, are the causes of inconstancy.

He no longer loves the person he loved ten years ago. I can well believe it. She is no longer the same, nor is he. He was young, and so was she; she is quite different. He would perhaps love her still were she what she then was.

Reasons, seen from afar, appear to restrict our view, but not when we reach them; we begin to see beyond.

... We look at things not only from other sides, but with other eyes, and care not to find them alike.

Diversity is so ample, that all tones of voice, all modes of walking, coughing, blowing the nose, sneering. We distinguish different kinds of vine by their fruit, and name them the Condrieu, the Desargues, and this stock. But is this all? Has a vine ever produced two bunches exactly alike, and has a bunch ever two grapes alike? etc.

I never can judge of the same thing exactly in the same way. I cannot judge of my work while engaged on it. I must do as the painters, stand at a distance, but not too far. How far, then? Guess.

Diversity. — Theology is a science; but at the same time how many sciences! Man is a whole, but if we dissect him, will man be the head, the heart, the stomach, the veins, each vein, each portion of a vein, the blood, each humour of the blood?

A town, a champaign, is from afar a town and a champaign; but as we approach there are houses, trees, tiles, leaves, grass, emmets, limbs of emmets, in infinite series. All this is comprised under the word champaign.

We like to see the error, the passion of Cleobuline, because she is not aware of it. She would be displeasing if she were not deceived.

What a confusion of judgment is that, by which every one puts himself above all the rest of the world, and loves his own advantage and the duration of his happiness or his life above those of all others.

DIVERSION.



DIVERSION. — WHEN I have set myself now and then to consider the various distractions of men, the toils and dangers to which they expose themselves in the court or the camp, whence arise so many quarrels and passions, such daring and often such evil exploits, etc., I have discovered that all the misfortunes of men arise from one thing only, that they are unable to stay quietly in their own chamber. A man who has enough to live on, if he knew how to dwell with pleasure in his own home, would not leave it for sea-faring or to besiege a city. An office in the army would not be bought so dearly but that it seems insupportable not to stir from the town, and people only seek conversation and amusing games because they cannot remain with pleasure in their own homes.

But upon stricter examination, when, having found the cause of all our ills, I have sought to discover the reason of it, I have found one which is paramount, the natural evil of our weak and mortal condition, so miserable that nothing can console us when we think of it attentively.

Whatever condition we represent to ourselves, if we bring to our minds all the advantages it is possible to possess, Royalty is the finest position in the world. Yet, when we imagine a king surrounded with all the conditions which he can desire, if he be without diversion, and be allowed to consider and examine what he is, this feeble happiness will never sustain him; he will necessarily fall into a foreboding of maladies which threaten him, of revolutions which may arise, and lastly, of death and inevitable diseases; so that if he be without what is called diversion he is unhappy, and more unhappy than the humblest of his subjects who plays and diverts himself.

Hence it comes that play and the society of women, war, and offices of state, are so sought after. Not that there is in these any real happiness, or that any

imagine true bliss to consist in the money won at play, or in the hare which is hunted; we would not have these as gifts. We do not seek an easy and peaceful lot which leaves us free to think of our unhappy condition, nor the dangers of war, nor the troubles of statecraft, but seek rather the distraction which amuses us, and diverts our mind from these thoughts.

Hence it comes that men so love noise and movement, hence it comes that a prison is so horrible a punishment, hence it comes that the pleasure of solitude is a thing incomprehensible. And it is the great subject of happiness in the condition of kings, that all about them try incessantly to divert them, and to procure for them all manner of pleasures.

The king is surrounded by persons who think only how to divert the king, and to prevent his thinking of self. For he is unhappy, king though he be, if he think of self.

That is all that human ingenuity can do for human happiness. And those who philosophise on the matter, and think men unreasonable that they pass a whole day in hunting a hare which they would not have bought, scarce know our nature. The hare itself would not free us from the view of death and our miseries, but the chase of the hare does free us. Thus, when we make it a reproach that what they seek with such eagerness cannot satisfy them, if they answered as on mature judgment they should do, that they sought in it only violent and impetuous occupation to turn their thoughts from self, and that therefore they made choice of an attractive object which charms and ardently attracts them, they would leave their adversaries without a reply. But they do not so answer because they do not know themselves; they do not know they seek the chase and not the quarry.

They fancy that were they to gain such and such an office they would then rest with pleasure, and are unaware of the insatiable nature of their desire. They believe they are honestly seeking repose, but they are only seeking agitation.

They have a secret instinct prompting them to look for diversion and occupation from without, which arises from the sense of their continual pain. They have another secret instinct, a relic of the greatness of our primitive nature,

teaching them that happiness indeed consists in rest, and not in turmoil. And of these two contrary instincts a confused project is formed within them, concealing itself from their sight in the depths of their soul, leading them to aim at rest through agitation, and always to imagine that they will gain the satisfaction which as yet they have not, if by surmounting certain difficulties which now confront them, they may thereby open the door to rest.

Thus rolls all our life away. We seek repose by resistance to obstacles, and so soon as these are surmounted, repose becomes intolerable. For we think either on the miseries we feel or on those we fear. And even when we seem sheltered on all sides, weariness, of its own accord, will spring from the depths of the heart wherein are its natural roots, and fill the soul with its poison.

The counsel given to Pyrrhus to take the rest of which he was going in search through so many labours, was full of difficulties.

A gentleman sincerely believes that the chase is a great, and even a royal sport, but his whipper-in does not share his opinion.

Dancing. — We must think where to place our feet.

But can you say what object he has in all this? The pleasure of boasting to-morrow among his friends that he has played better than another. Thus others sweat in their closets to prove to the learned world that they have solved an algebraical problem hitherto insoluble, while many more expose themselves to the greatest perils, in my judgment as foolishly, for the glory of taking a town. Again, others kill themselves, by their very application to all these studies, not indeed that they may grow wiser, but simply to prove that they know them; these are the most foolish of the band, because they are so wittingly, whereas it is reasonable to suppose of the others, that were they but aware of it, they would give over their folly.

A man passes his life without weariness in playing every day for a small stake. Give him each morning, on condition he does not play, the money he might possibly win, and you make him miserable. It will be said, perhaps, that he seeks the amusement of play, and not the winnings. Make him then play for nothing, he will not be excited over it, and will soon be wearied. Mere diversion then is not his pursuit, a languid and passionless amusement will weary him. He must grow warm in it, and cheat himself by thinking that he is made happy by gaining what he would despise if it were given him not to play; and must frame for himself a subject of passion and excitement to employ his desire, his wrath, his fear, as children are frightened at a face they themselves have daubed.

Whence comes it that a man who within a few months has lost his only son, or who this morning was overwhelmed with law suits and wrangling, now thinks of them no more? Be not surprised; he is altogether taken up with looking out for the boar which his hounds have been hunting so hotly for the last six hours. He needs no more. However full of sadness a man may be, he is happy for the time, if you can only get him to enter into some diversion. And however happy a man may be, he will soon become dispirited and miserable if he be not diverted and occupied by some passion or pursuit which hinders his being overcome by weariness. Without diversion no joy, with diversion no sadness. And this forms the happiness of persons in high position, that they have a number of people to divert them, and that they have the power to keep themselves in this state.

Take heed to this. What is it to be superintendent, chancellor, first president, but to be in a condition wherein from early morning a vast number of persons flock in from every side, so as not to leave them an hour in the day in which they can think of themselves? And if they are in disgrace and dismissed to their country houses, though they want neither wealth nor retinue at need, they yet are miserable and desolate because no one hinders them from thinking of themselves.

Thus man is so unhappy that he wearies himself without cause of weariness by the peculiar state of his temperament, and he is so frivolous that, being full of a

thousand essential causes of weariness, the least thing, such as a cue and a ball to strike with it, is enough to divert him.

Diversions. — Men are charged from infancy with the care of their honour, their fortunes, and their friends, and more, with the care of the fortunes and honour of their friends. They are overwhelmed with business, with the study of languages and bodily exercises; they are given to understand that they cannot be happy unless their health, their honour, their fortune and that of their friends be in good condition, and that a single point wanting will render them unhappy. Thus we give them business and occupations which harass them incessantly from the very dawn of day. A strange mode, you will say, of making them happy. What more could be done to make them miserable? What could be done? We need only release them from all these cares, for then they would see themselves; they would think on what they are, whence they come, and whither they go, and therefore it is impossible to occupy and distract them too much. This is why, after having provided them with constant business, if there be any time to spare we urge them to employ it in diversion and in play, so as to be always fully occupied.

How comes it that this man, distressed at the death of his wife and his only son, or who has some great and embarrassing law suit, is not at this moment sad, and that he appears so free from all painful and distressing thoughts? We need not be astonished, for a ball has just been served to him, and he must return it to his opponent. His whole thoughts are fixed on taking it as it falls from the pent-house, to win a chase; and you cannot ask that he should think on his business, having this other affair in hand. Here is a care worthy of occupying this great soul, and taking away from him every other thought of the mind. This man, born to know the Universe, to judge of all things, to rule a State, is altogether occupied and filled with the business of catching a hare. And if he will not abase himself to this, and wishes always to be highly strung, he will only be more foolish still, because he wishes to raise himself above humanity; yet when all is said and done

he is only a man, that is to say capable of little and of much, of all and of nothing. He is neither angel nor brute, but man.

One thought alone occupies us, we cannot think of two things at once; a good thing for us from a worldly point of view, but not as regards God.

Diversion. — Death is easier to bear without the thought of it, than is the thought of death without danger.

Diversion. — Men, unable to remedy death, sorrow, and ignorance, determine, in order to make themselves happy, not to think on these things.

Notwithstanding these miseries, man wishes to be happy, and wishes for happiness only; unable to wish otherwise, he knows not how to gain happiness. For this he must needs make himself immortal; but unable to effect this, he sets himself to avoid the thought of death.

The miseries of human life are the cause of all this; having a perception of them men take to diversion.

Diversion. — If man were happy he would be the more so the less he was diverted, like the Saints and God.

Yes: but is not the power of being pleased with diversion in itself a happiness? No; for that comes from elsewhere and from without, so it is dependent, and therefore liable to be troubled by a thousand accidents, which make afflictions inevitable.

Misery. — The one thing which consoles us for our miseries is diversion, yet this itself is the greatest of our miseries. For this it is which mainly hinders us from thinking of ourselves, and which insensibly destroys us. Without this we should be weary, and weariness would drive us to seek a more abiding way out of it. But diversion beguiles us and leads us insensibly onward to death.

This is all they have been able to discover to console them in so many evils. But it is a miserable consolation, since it does not serve for the cure of the evil, but simply for the concealment of it for a short time, and its very concealment prevents the thought of any true cure. Thus by a strange inversion of man's nature he finds that the weariness which is his most sensible evil, is in some measure his greatest good, because more than any thing else it contributes to make him seek his true healing, and that the diversion which he regards as his greatest good is in fact his greatest evil, because more than any thing else it prevents his seeking the remedy for his evils. Both of these are admirable proofs of man's misery and corruption, and at the same time of his greatness, since man is only weary of all things, and only seeks this multitude of occupations because he has the idea of a lost happiness. And not finding this in himself, he seeks it vainly in external things, without being able to content himself, because it is neither in us, nor in the creature, but in God alone.

Thoughts. — In omnibus requiem quæsivi.

Were our condition truly happy we need not turn our minds from it in order to become happy.

A little matter consoles us, because a little matter afflicts us.

Strife alone pleases us and not the victory. We like to see beasts fighting, not the victor furious over the vanquished. We wish only to see the victorious end, and as soon as it comes, we are surfeited. It is the same in play, and in the search for truth. In all disputes we like to see the clash of opinions, but care not at all to contemplate truth when found. If we are to see truth with pleasure, we must see it arise out of conflict.

So in the passions, there is pleasure in seeing the shock of two contraries, but as soon as one gains the mastery it becomes mere brutality. We never seek things in themselves, but only the search for things. So on the stage, quiet scenes which

raise no emotion are worthless, so is extreme and hopeless misery, so are brutal lust and excessive cruelty.

Continuous eloquence wearies.

Princes and kings sometimes unbend. They are not for ever on their thrones, where they grow weary. Grandeur to be felt must be abandoned, continuity in any thing is displeasing. Cold is pleasant, that we may seek warmth.

Weariness. — Nothing is so insupportable to man as to be completely at rest, without passion, without business, without diversion, without study. He then feels his nothingness, his loneliness, his insufficiency, his dependence, his weakness, his emptiness.

At once, from the depth of his soul, will arise weariness, gloom, sadness, vexation, disappointment, despair.

Agitation. — When a soldier complains of his work, or a ploughman, etc., force them to be idle.

Diversion. — Is not the royal dignity itself so truly great as to make its possessor happy by the mere contemplation of what he is? Must he be diverted from this thought like ordinary people? I see well enough that a man may be made happy by diverting him from the thought of his domestic sorrows so that he apply all his care to excel in dancing. But will it be the same with a king, and will he be happier if he devote himself to these idle amusements rather than to the contemplation of his greatness? And what more satisfactory object can he offer to his mind? Might it not be to lessen his content that he occupy his soul in thinking how to suit his steps to the cadence of an air, or how to throw a bar skilfully, rather than allow it to enjoy peacefully the contemplation of the majesty which wraps him round? Let us make the experiment, let us leave a king all alone, without any gratifications of sense, or any occupation for the mind, without

companions, reflecting on himself at leisure, and it will be seen that a king without diversion is a man full of miseries. This is therefore carefully avoided, and there are always about the persons of kings a great number of people who watch to see that diversion succeeds to business, and look after their every hour of leisure to furnish them with pleasures and games, so that no vacancy may be left in life; that is, they are surrounded with persons who take wonderful pains that the king is never alone and able to think of self, knowing well that he will be miserable, king though he is, if he think of self.

In all this I am not speaking of Christian kings as Christians, but simply as kings.

Men busy themselves in pursuing a ball or a hare, and this is the pleasure even of kings.

Cæsar, as it seems to me, was too old to set about amusing himself with the conquest of the world. Such a pastime was good for Augustus or Alexander, who were still young men, and these are difficult to restrain, but Cæsar should have been more mature.

The weariness we experience in leaving occupations to which we are attached. A man lives with pleasure in his home, but if he see a woman who charms him, or if he take pleasure in play for five or six days, he is miserable if he return to his former mode of life. Nothing is more common than that.

Frivolity. — It is plain that the frivolity of the world is so little known, that it is a strange and surprising thing to say it is foolish to seek for greatness, and this is great cause for wonder.

Whoso does not see the frivolity of the world is himself most frivolous. And indeed all see it save young people, who are engaged in turmoil, diversion, and

the thought of the future. But take away their diversion and you will see them consumed with weariness; then they feel their nothingness without knowing it. For it is indeed to be unhappy to be intolerably sad as soon as we are reduced to the thought of self, without any diversion.

THE GREATNESS AND LITTLENESS

OF MAN.



Greatness, Littleness. — The more light we have, the more greatness and the more baseness we discover in man.

Ordinary men....

The more cultivated....

Philosophers.

They astonish ordinary men.

Christians. They astonish Philosophers.

Who then will be surprised to see that Religion only makes us know deeply what we already know in proportion to our light.

For Port Royal. Greatness and Littleness.

Littleness being correlative to greatness, and greatness to littleness, some have inferred man's littleness all the more because they have taken his greatness as a proof of it, and others have inferred his greatness with all the more force, because they have inferred it from his littleness; all that the one party was able to say for his greatness having served only as an argument of his littleness to others, because we are low in proportion to the height from which we have fallen, and the contrary is equally true. So that the one party returns on the other in an endless circle, for it is certain that in measure as men possess light the more they discern both the greatness and the littleness of man. In a word, man knows he is little. He is then little because he is so; but he is truly great because he knows it.

Man knows not in what rank to place himself. He has evidently gone astray and fallen from his true place, unable to find it again. Disquieted and unsuccessful he seeks it everywhere in impenetrable darkness.

Though we see all the miseries which close upon us and take us by the throat, we have an irrepressible instinct which raises us.

The greatness of Man. — We have so great an idea of the human soul that we cannot bear to be despised, or to lie under the disesteem of any soul, and all the happiness of men consists in that esteem.

The search after glory is the greatest vileness of man. Yet it is also the greatest mark of his excellence, for whatever riches he may have on earth, whatever health and advantage, he is not satisfied if he have not the esteem of men. He rates human reason so highly that whatever privileges he may have on earth, he is not content unless he stand well in the judgment of men. This is the finest position in the world, nothing can turn him from this desire, which is the most indelible quality of the human heart.

And those who most despise men, and place them on the level of the brutes, still wish to be admired and believed by men, and are in contradiction with themselves through their own feelings; their nature, which is stronger than all else, convincing them of the greatness of man more powerfully than reason convinces them of their vileness.

The vileness of man in that he submits himself to the brutes, and even worships them.

Instinct and reason, marks of two natures.

Description of man. Dependence, desire of independence, bodily needs.

Contradiction. To despise existence, to die for nothing, to hate our existence.

Man is neither angel nor brute, and the misfortune is that whoever would play the angel plays the brute.

If man is not made for God, why is he happy only in God?
If man is made for God, why is he so contrary to God?

Contraries. Man is naturally credulous and incredulous, timid and rash.

A corrupt nature. — Man does not act by reason, which constitutes his essence.

The nature of man is his whole nature, *omne animal*.
There is nothing we cannot make natural, nothing natural we cannot lose.

The true nature being lost, all becomes natural. As the true good being lost, all becomes truly good.

Misery. — Solomon and Job best knew, and have best spoken of human misery; the former the most fortunate, the latter the most unfortunate of men; the one knowing by experience the vanity of pleasure, the other the reality of evil.

It is dangerous to prove to man too plainly how nearly he is on a level with the brutes without showing him his greatness; it is also dangerous to show him his greatness too clearly apart from his vileness. It is still more dangerous to leave him in ignorance of both. But it is of great advantage to show him both.

How comes it that we have so much patience with those who are maimed in body, and so little with those who are defective in mind? Because a cripple recognises that we have the true use of our legs, but the fool maintains that we are they whose understanding halts; were it not so we should feel pity and not anger.

Epictetus puts it yet more strongly: “How comes it that we are not angry if a man says we have an headache, but are angry if told we use a weak argument or make a wrong choice?” The reason of this is that we are quite certain we have no headache, or are not lame, but we are not equally sure that our judgment is correct. So having no assurance but that we see with our whole powers of sight, we are startled and confounded when another with equal powers sees the exact opposite, especially when a thousand others laugh at our decision; for then we must prefer our light to that of so many others, a daring and difficult matter. There is never this contradiction in feeling as to a cripple.

Man is so framed that by dint of telling him he is a fool he believes it, and by dint of telling it to himself he makes himself believe it. For man holds a secret communing with himself, which it behoves him well to regulate: *Corrumpunt mores bonos colloquia prava*. We must keep silent as much as possible, and converse with ourselves only of God, whom we know to be true, and thus we persuade ourselves of truth.

I will not suffer him to rest on himself, nor on another, so that being without a resting place or repose....

If he exalt himself I humble him, if he humble himself I exalt him, and ever contradict him, till he comprehend that he is an incomprehensible monster.

The greatness of man consists in thought.

A thinking reed. — Not from space must I seek my dignity, but from the ruling of my thought. I should have no more if I possessed whole worlds. By space the Universe encompasses and swallows me as an atom, by thought I encompass it.

Man is but a reed, weakest in nature, but a reed which thinks. It needs not that the whole Universe should arm to crush him. A vapour, a drop of water is enough

to kill him. But were the Universe to crush him, man would still be more noble than that which has slain him, because he knows that he dies, and that the Universe has the better of him. The Universe knows nothing of this.

All our dignity therefore consists in thought. By this must we raise ourselves, not by space or duration which we cannot fill. Then let us make it our study to think well, for this is the starting-point of morals.

The greatness of man is great in that he knows he is miserable. A tree does not know that it is miserable.

It is therefore little to know ourselves little, and it is great to know ourselves little.

Thus his very infirmities proves man's greatness. They are the infirmities of a great lord, of a discrowned king.

The greatness of man is so evident that it is even proved by his littleness. For what in animals is nature we call in man littleness, whereby we recognise that his nature being now like that of animals he is fallen from a better nature which once was his.

For what man ever was unhappy at not being a king, save a discrowned king? Was Paulus Emilius unhappy at being no longer consul? On the contrary, all men thought him happy in having filled that office, because it was involved in it that it should be but temporary. But Perseus was thought so unhappy in being no longer king, because the condition of royalty involved his being always king, that it was thought strange he could bear to live. No man thinks himself unhappy in having but one mouth, but any man is unhappy if he have but one eye. No man was ever grieved at not having three eyes, but any man is inconsolable if he have none.

Perseus, King of Macedon. — Paulus Emilius reproached Perseus for not killing himself.

There is no misery apart from sensation. A ruined house is not miserable. Man only is miserable. *Ego vir videns.*

It is then thought which makes man's being, and without this we cannot conceive him. What is it in us which feels pleasure? The hand? The arm? The flesh? The blood? We see that it roust be something immaterial.

I can easily conceive a man without hands, feet, head, for it is only experience which teaches us that the head is more necessary than the feet. But I cannot conceive a man without thought; he would be a stone or a brute.

Man is evidently made for thought, this is his whole dignity and his whole merit; his whole duty is to think as he ought. Now the order of thought is to begin with self, and with its author and its end.

Now of what thinks the world? Never of these things, but of dancing, playing the lute, singing, making verses, tilting at the ring, etc., of fighting, making ourselves kings, without thinking what it is to be a king, or what to be a man.

Thought. — The whole dignity of man lies in thought But what is this thought? how foolish it is!

Thought is then in its nature admirable and incomparable. It must have strange defects to be despicable, but it has these, and so nothing is more ridiculous.

How great it is in essence, how vile in defects!

Contraries. After having shown the vileness and the greatness of man. — Let man now estimate his value. Let him love himself, because he has a nature capable of good, but let him not therefore love the vileness which exists in that nature. Let him despise himself, because this capacity is void, but let him not

therefore despise his natural capacity. Let him hate himself, let him love himself: he has in himself the power of knowing the truth and being happy, and yet has found no truth either permanent or satisfactory.

I would then lead man to the desire of finding it; to be free from passions and ready to follow it where he may find it, knowing how his knowledge is obscured by the passions. I would that he should hate in himself the desires which bias his judgment, that they may neither blind him in making his choice, nor obstruct him when he has chosen.

I blame equally those who take on themselves to praise man, those who take on themselves to blame him, and those who merely amuse themselves; I can approve those only who seek with tears.

The stoics say, “Retire within yourselves, there will you find your rest;” which is not true. Others say, “Go out of yourselves, seek your happiness in diversion;” nor is that true, for sickness may come.

Happiness is neither without us nor within us; it is in God, both without us and within us.

OF THE DECEPTIVE POWERS OF

THE IMAGINATION.



Of the deceptive powers. — Man is only a subject full of natural error, which is indelible without grace. Nothing shows him the truth, everything deceives him. These two principles of truth, reason and the senses, in addition to the fact that they are both wanting in sincerity, reciprocally deceive each other. The senses trick the reason by false appearances, and gain from reason in their turn the same deception with which they deceive; reason avenges herself. The passions of the soul trouble the senses, and make on them false impressions. They lie and deceive, outvying one another.

But beyond those errors which come by accident, and by a lack of intelligence, with these heterogeneous faculties.... *To begin thus the chapter on the deceptive powers*.

Imagination. — This is that deceitful part of man, the mistress of error and falsity, the more knavish that she is not always so, for she would be an infallible rule of truth, if she were an infallible rule of lying. But being for the most part false, she gives no mark of her character, stamping the true and the false with the same die.

I speak not of fools, but of the wisest men, and it is among them that imagination has the great gift of persuasion. Reason protests in vain, for she can make no true estimate.

This proud potentate, who loves to rule and domineer over her enemy, reason, has established in man a second nature in order to show her wide-spread influence. She makes men happy and miserable, sound and sick, rich and poor; she obliges reason to believe, doubt and deny; she dulls the senses, or sharpens them; she has her fools and wise; and nothing vexes us more than to see that she

fills her votaries with a satisfaction far more full and entire than does reason. Those whose imagination is active feel greater complacency than the truly wise can reasonably allow themselves to feel. They look down on other men as from the height of empire, they argue with assurance and confidence, others with diffidence and fear, and this gaiety of countenance often gives the former an advantage in the minds of their hearers; such favour do the imaginary wise find from judges like-minded. Imagination cannot make fools wise, but it makes them content, and so triumphs over reason, which can only make its friends miserable; the one covers them with glory, the other with shame.

What but this faculty of imagination dispenses reputation, assigns respect and veneration to persons, works, laws, and the great? How valueless are all the treasures of earth without her consent!

You would say that this magistrate whose reverend age commands the respect of a whole people is swayed by pure and lofty reason, that he judges all causes according to their true nature, unmoved by those mere accidents which only affect the imagination of the weak. See him go to sermon with devout zeal, strengthening his firm and impartial reason by the ardour of his divine love. He is ready to listen with exemplary respect. The preacher appears; but if nature have given him a hoarse voice or a comic face, if his barber have shaven him ill, or if his clothes be splashed more than is wont, then however great the truths he announces, I wager that our statesman lose his gravity.

Set the greatest philosopher in the world on a plank really wider than he needs, but hanging over a precipice, and though reason convince him of his security, imagination will prevail. Many will scarce bear the thought without a cold sweat.

I will not name all its effects. Every one knows that the sight of cats, and rats, or the crushing of a coal, etc., may quite unhinge the reason. The tone of voice will affect the wisest and change the whole force of a speech or a poem.

Love or hate will change the aspect of justice, and an advocate retained with a large fee has an increased confidence in the right of the cause he pleads, while the

assurance of his demeanour commends it to the judges, duped in their turn by appearances. How ridiculous is reason, swayed by a breath in every direction!

I should have to enumerate almost every action of men who seldom stagger but under her shocks. For reason has been forced to yield, and the wisest reason accepts as her own those principles which the imagination of men has everywhere casually introduced.

Our magistrates are well aware of this mystery. Their scarlet robes, the ermine in which they wrap themselves like furred cats, the halls in which they administer justice, the *fleurs-de-lis*, and all their august apparatus are most necessary; if the doctors had not their cassocks and their mules, if the lawyers had not their square caps, and their robes four times too wide, they would never have duped the world, which cannot resist so authoritative an appearance. Soldiers alone are not disguised after this fashion, because indeed their part is the more essential, they establish themselves by force, the others by fraud.

So our kings seek out no disguises. They do not mask themselves in strange garments to appear such, but they are accompanied by guards and halberdiers. Those armed puppets who have hands and power for them alone, those trumpets and drums which go before them, and those legions round about them, make the firmest tremble. They have not dress only, but power; we need an highly refined reason to regard as an ordinary man the Grand Turk, in his superb seraglio, surrounded with forty thousand janissaries.

We cannot even see an advocate in his long robe and with his cap on his head, without an enhanced opinion of his ability.

If magistrates had true justice, and if doctors had the true art of healing, they would have no need of square caps, the majesty of these sciences were of itself venerable enough. But having only imaginary knowledge, they must take these instruments, idle, but striking to the imagination with which they have to deal, and by that in fact they gain respect.

Imagination is the disposer of all things, it creates beauty, justice and happiness, and these are the world’s all. I should much like to see an Italian work,

of which I know the title only, but such a title is worth many books: *Della opinione Regina del mondo*. I accept the book without knowing it, save the evil in it, if there be any.

These are for the most part the effects of that deceptive faculty, which seems to have been given us expressly to lead us into necessary error. Of error however we have many other sources.

Not only are old impressions capable of deceiving us, the charms of novelty have the same power. Hence arise all the disputes of men, who charge each other either with following the false impressions of childhood or of running rashly after new. Who rightly keeps a middle way? Let him appear and make good his pretensions. There is no principle, however natural to us even from childhood, which may not be made to pass for a false impression either of education or of sense.

“Because,” say some, “you have believed from childhood that a box was empty when you saw nothing in it, you have therefore believed the possibility of a vacuum. This is an illusion of your senses, strengthened by custom, which science must correct.” “Because,” say others, “you were taught at school that there is no such thing as a vacuum, your common sense, which clearly comprehended the matter before, is corrupted, and you must correct this false impression by returning to your primitive nature.” Which has deceived you, your senses or your education?

Diseases are another source of error. They impair our judgment and our senses, and if the more violent produce a sensible change, I do not doubt that slighter ailments produce each its proportionate impression.

Our own interest is again a wonderful instrument for putting out our eyes in a pleasant way. The man of greatest probity can not be judge in his own cause; I know some who that they may not fall into this self love are, out of opposition, thoroughly unjust. The certain way of ruining a just cause has been to get it recommended to these men by their near relatives.

Justice and truth are two such subtle points, that our instruments are too blunt to touch them accurately. If they attain the point they cover it so completely that they rest more often on the wrong than the right.

There is internecine war in man between the reason and the passions.

If he had only reason without passions....

If he had only passions without reason....

But having both he must have continual strife, since he cannot be at peace with one unless he be at war with the other. Hence he is always divided against and contrary to himself.

The habit of seeing kings accompanied by guards, drums, officers and all those things which mechanically incline man to respect and terror, causes their countenance, when now and then seen alone, and without these accompaniments, to impress respect and terror on their subjects, because our thought cannot separate their personality from those surroundings with which it is ordinarily joined. And the world which does not know that the effect arises from habit, believes that it arises from natural force, and hence come such expressions as: “The character of Divinity is imprinted on his countenance,” etc.

The power of kings is based both on the reason and the folly of the people, and mainly on their folly. The greatest and most important matter in the world has weakness for its foundation, and this foundation is admirably sure, for there is nothing more sure than this, that the people will be weak. What is founded on sound reason is very ill founded, as the value of wisdom.

The chancellor is grave, and clothed with ornaments, for his position is unreal. Not so the king, he has power and nothing to do with imagination. Judges, doctors, etc., depend solely on imagination.

Empire founded on opinion and imagination lasts some time, the rule is gentle and willingly accepted; that founded on power lasts for ever. Thus opinion is, as it were, queen of the world, but power is its tyrant.

Power is the queen of the world, not opinion, but opinion makes use of power.

Power creates opinion. Gentleness is beautiful, as we think. Why? Because he who goes to extremes will be alone, and I will make a stronger cabal of people who will say it is inexpedient.

The cords attached by the respect of man for man, are, for the most part, cords of necessity, for there must be different degrees, all men wishing to rule, but not all being able to do so, though some are able.

Let us suppose then we see men beginning to form a society. They will no doubt fight till the stronger party gets the better of the weaker, and a dominant party is constituted. But so soon as this is once settled, the masters not wishing that the strife should continue, declare that the power in their hands shall be transmitted as they please, some placing it in the choice of the people, others in the succession of birth, etc.

And here imagination begins to play her part. Till now power has constrained facts, now power is upheld by imagination in a certain party, in France that of the nobles, in Switzerland that of the burgesses, etc.

The cords therefore which bind the respect of men to any given man are the cords of imagination.

Our imagination so enlarges the present by dint of continually reflecting on it, and so contracts eternity, by never reflecting on it, that we make a nothing of eternity and an eternity of nothing; and all this has such living roots in us, that all our reason cannot suppress them, and that....

The imagination enlarges little objects so as to fill our soul with its fantastic estimate, and by a rash insolence belittles the great to its own measure, as when it speaks of God.

Things which have the greatest hold on us, as the concealing our small possessions, are often a mere nothing. It is a nothing which our imagination magnifies into a mountain, another turn of imagination would make us discover its nothingness without difficulty.

Two faces which resemble each other, neither of which alone causes our laughter, make us laugh, when together, by their resemblance.

Children who are frightened at the face they have daubed are mere children, but how shall one who is so weak when a child grow truly strong as he grows old? We only change our fancies.

All that is brought to perfection by progress perishes also by progress. All that has been weak can never be absolutely strong. It is in vain to say, “He has grown, he has changed.” He is also the same.

My fancy makes me hate a man who breathes hard when he is eating. Fancy has great weight. Will you profit by yielding to this weight because it is natural? No; but by resisting it.

Prejudice leading into error. — It is a deplorable thing to see all men deliberating on means alone, and not on the end. Every man thinks how he may acquit himself in his condition, but as for the choice of condition or of country, chance gives them to us.

It is a pitiable thing, to see so many Turks, heretics and infidels, follow the way of their fathers for the simple reason that each has been told it is the best. And that

fixes for each man his condition, locksmith, soldier, etc.

Therefore savages would care nothing for Provence.

Ferox gens, nullam esse vitam sine armis rati. They love death rather than peace, other men love death rather than war.

Every opinion may be held in preference to life, of which the love seems so strong and so natural.

Thoughts. — All is one, all is diverse. How many natures in that of man, how many vocations! And by what a chance does each man take ordinarily what he has heard praised. A well turned heel.

The heel of a slipper. — How well this is turned, here is a clever workman, how brave is this soldier! Such is the source of our inclinations and of the choice of conditions. How much this man drinks, how little that man! That is what makes men sober or drunken, soldiers, cowards, etc.

Glory. — Admiration spoils everything from infancy. How well said, how well done, how clever he is! etc.

The children of Port Royal, who are not urged with this spur of envy and glory, become careless.

Glory. — The brutes have no admiration for each other. A horse does not admire his companion. Not but that they have their rivalries in a race, but that entails no consequences, for once in the stable the heaviest and most ill-formed does not yield his oats to another, as men would expect from others in their own case. Their virtue is satisfied with itself.

First degree: to be blamed for doing evil, and praised for doing good. Second degree: to be neither praised nor blamed.

Brave deeds are most estimable when hidden. When I see some of these in history they please me much. But after all they have not been wholly hidden, since they have become known. And though all has been done to hide them that could be done, the little whereby they have appeared has spoiled all, for what was finest in them was the desire to hide them.

We are not content with the life we have in ourselves and in our own being, we wish to live an imaginary life in the idea of others, and to this end we strive to make a show. We labour incessantly to embellish and preserve this imaginary being, and we neglect the true. And if we have either calmness, generosity, or fidelity, we hasten to let it be known, that we may attach these virtues to that imaginary being; we would even part with them for this end, and gladly become cowards for the reputation of valour. It is a great mark of the nothingness of our own being that we are not satisfied with the one without the other, and that we often renounce one for the other. For he would be infamous who would not die to preserve his honour.

Vocations. — The sweetness of glory is so great that join it to what we will, even to death, we love it.

Evil is easy, and its forms are infinite; good is almost unique. But a certain kind of evil is as difficult to find as what is called good; and often on this account this particular kind of evil gets passed off as good. There is even needed an extraordinary greatness of soul to attain to it as well as to good.

We are so presumptuous that we would fain be known by the whole world, even by those who shall come after, when we are no more. And we are such triflers that the esteem of five or six persons about us diverts and contents us.

Vanity is so anchored in the heart of man that a soldier, a camp-follower, a cook, a porter makes his boasts, and is for having his admirers; even philosophers wish for them. Those who write against it, yet desire the glory of having written well, those who read, desire the glory of having read; I who write this have, may be, this desire, and perhaps those who will read it....

In towns through which we pass we care not whether men esteem us, but we do care if we have to live there any time. How long is needed? A time in proportion to our vain and fleeting life.

The condition of man; inconstancy, weariness, unrest.

Whoever will know fully the vanity of man has but to consider the causes and the effects of love. The cause is an unknown quantity, and the effects are terrible. This unknown quantity, so small a matter that we cannot recognise it, moves a whole country, princes, armies, and all the world.

Cleopatra's nose: had it been shorter, the face of the world had been changed.

Nothing better shows the frivolity of men than to consider what are the causes and what the effects of love, for all the universe is changed by them. Cleopatra's nose.

Frivolity. — The cause and the effects of love. Cleopatra.

Pride is a counterpoise, and turns the scale against all woes. Here is a strange monster, a very visible aberration. Behold him fallen from his place, and anxiously seeking it. That is what all men do. Let us see who has found it.

Contradiction. — Pride is a counterpoise to all miseries. Man either conceals them, or if he display them, glories in the knowledge of them.

Of the desire of being esteemed by those with whom we are. — Pride has a natural possession of us in the midst of our miseries, errors, etc. We can even lose our life with joy, if men will but talk of it.

Vanity, play, hunting, visiting, false pretences, a lasting name.

Pride. — Curiosity is mere frivolity. For the most part we want to know only for the sake of talking. People would not make voyages if they were never to speak of them, for the sole pleasure of seeing, without hope of ever communicating their impressions.

OF JUSTICE, CUSTOMS, AND PREJUDICES.



ON WHAT SHALL man found the economy of the world which he would fain govern? If on the caprice of each man, all is confusion. If on justice, man is ignorant of it.

Certainly had he known it, he would not have established the maxim, most general of all current among men, that every one must conform to the manners of his own country; the splendour of true equity would have brought all nations into subjection, and legislators would not have taken as their model the fancies and caprice of Persians and Germans instead of stable justice. We should have seen it established in all the States of the world, in all times, whereas now we see neither justice nor injustice which does not change its quality upon changing its climate. Three degrees of latitude reverse all jurisprudence, a meridian decides what is truth, fundamental laws change after a few years of possession, right has its epochs, the entrance of Saturn into the Lion marks for us the origin of such and such a crime. That is droll justice which is bounded by a stream! Truth on this side of the Pyrenees, error on that.

It is admitted that justice is not in these customs, but that it resides in natural laws common to every country. This would no doubt be maintained with obstinacy if the rash chance which has disseminated human laws had lighted upon even one that is universal, but the singularity of the matter is that owing to the vagaries of human caprice there is not one.

Theft, incest, infanticide, parricide, all have found a place among virtuous actions. Can there be any thing more absurd than that a man should have the right to kill me because he lives across the water, and because his prince has a quarrel with mine, although I have none with him? There are no doubt natural laws, but fair reason once corrupted has corrupted all. *Nihil amplius nostrum est; quod*

nostrum dicimus, artis est. Ex senatus consultis, et plebiscitis crimina exercentur. Ut olim vitiis, sic nunc legibus laboramus.

From this confusion it results that one declares the essence of justice to be the authority of the legislator, another, the convenience of the sovereign, another, existing custom, and this is the most sure; nothing which follows reason alone is just in itself, all shifts and changes with time; custom creates equity, by the simple reason that this is received. It is the mystical foundation of its authority, whoever carries it back to first principles annihilates it. Nothing is so faulty as those laws which correct faults. Whoever obeys them because they are just, obeys an imaginary justice, not law in its essence; it is altogether self-contained, it is law and nothing more. Whoever will examine its motive will find it so feeble and so slight that if he be not used to contemplate the marvels of human imagination, he will wonder that a single century has gained for it so much pomp and reverence. It is the art of disturbance and of revolution to shake established customs, sounding them to their source, to mark their want of authority and justice. We must, it is said, return to the primitive and fundamental laws of the State, abolished by unjust custom. It is a game wherein we are sure to lose all; in this balance nothing would be true, yet the people easily lends an ear to such talk as this. They shake off the yoke as soon as they recognise it, and the great profit by its ruin, and by the ruin of those who have too curiously examined recognised customs. This is why the wisest of law givers said that it was often necessary to cheat men for their good, and another, a good politician, *Quum veritatem qua liberetur ignoret, expedit quod fallatur*. We ought not to feel the truth that law is but usurpation; it was once introduced without reason, and has become reasonable; it is necessary to cause it to be regarded as eternal and authoritative, and to conceal the beginning if we do not wish it should soon come to an end.

I have passed much of my life believing that justice existed, and in this I did not deceive myself, for there is justice according as God has willed to reveal it to us. But I did not take it so, and in that I deceived myself, for I believed that our

justice was essentially just, and that I had that whereby I was able to know and judge of it. But I so often find that my right judgment was at fault, that at last I have begun to distrust myself, and then others. I saw in all countries that men change, and thus after many changes of judgment concerning true justice, I recognised that our nature was a continual change, and I have not changed since; were I to change I should but strengthen my opinion. The sceptic Archesilas became a dogmatist.

The most unreasonable things in the world become most reasonable, because of the unruly lives of men. What is less reasonable than to choose the eldest son of a queen to guide a state? for we do not choose as steersman of a ship that one of the passengers who is of the best family. Such a law would be ridiculous and unjust; but since they are so themselves, and ever will be, it becomes reasonable and just. For would they choose the most virtuous and able, we at once fall to blows, since each asserts that he is the most virtuous and able. Let us then affix this quality to something which cannot be disputed. This man is the king's eldest son. That is clear, and there is no dispute. Reason can do no better, for civil war is the worst of evils.

Men of unruly lives assert that they alone follow nature, while those who are orderly stray from her paths; as passengers in a ship think that those move who stand upon the shore. Both sides say the same thing. There must be a fixed point to enable us to judge. The harbour decides the question for those who are in the vessel, but where can we find the harbour in morals?

When all moves equally, nothing seems to move, as in a ship. When all tend to vice, none appears to do so. Whoever stops draws attention to the onward movement of others, as does a fixed point.

Justice is what is established, and thus all our established laws are necessarily held to be just without being examined, because they are established.

Justice. — As fashion makes what is agreeable, so it makes what is just.

Our natural principles are but principles of custom. In children natural principles are those which they have received from the habits of their fathers, as hunting in animals.

A different custom will produce different natural principles. This experience testifies, and if there are some natural principles ineradicable by custom, so are there some customs opposed to nature ineradicable by nature, or by a second custom. This depends on constitution.

Fathers fear that the natural love of their children may be effaced. Now what sort of thing is that nature which is liable to be effaced. Custom is a second nature which destroys the former. But what is nature, for is not custom natural? I am greatly afraid that nature itself may be only our first custom, as custom is second nature.

Montaigne was wrong: custom should only be followed because it is custom, and not because it is reasonable or just; but most men follow it for the simple reason that they think it just. Otherwise they would not follow it though it were the custom, for our only desire is to be subjected to reason or to justice. Without this, custom would pass for tyranny, but the empire of reason and justice is no more tyrannical than that of choice. These are principles natural to man.

It is then good to obey laws and customs because they are laws, but we ought to know that there is neither truth nor justice to introduce into them, that we know nothing about these, and can therefore only follow what is recognised, and thus we should never transgress them. But most men cannot receive this doctrine, and since they believe that truth can be found, and that it resides in law and custom,

they believe these laws, and take their antiquity as a proof of their truth, and not merely of their authority apart from truth. Thus they obey the laws, but are liable to revolt when these are shown to be of no value; and this may be proved of all of them, looked at from a certain point of view.

Injustice. — The authority of the judge is not given him for his sake, but for that of the judged. It is dangerous to say this to the people, but the people have too much faith in you; that will not harm them, and may serve you. You must then say it openly. *Pasce oves meas*, not *tuas*. You owe me pasturage.

Injustice. — It is dangerous to say to the people that the laws are not just, for men obey them only because they think them just. Therefore it is necessary to say at the same time that they must be obeyed because they are laws, as superiors must be obeyed, not because they are just, but because they are superiors. All sedition is averted, if this principle be established and it be understood what is rightly the definition of justice.

If God gave us masters direct from himself, how heartily ought we to obey them! Circumstances and necessity are infallible masters.

Custom is our nature. Whoever is accustomed to the faith believes in it, can no longer even fear hell, and believes in nothing else. Whoever accustoms himself to believe that the king is terrible ... etc. Who doubts then that our soul, being accustomed to see number, space, and motion, believes that and nothing else?

Veri juris; we have it no longer; had we it, we should not take the manners of our country as our rule of justice.

Here, not finding justice, we fall back on force, etc.

It is a ridiculous thing to consider that there are people in the world who, having renounced all the laws of God and nature, have yet made laws for themselves which they exactly obey, as, for instance, the soldiers of Mahomet, thieves, heretics, etc., and thus logicians....

It seems as though their licence must be without limit or barrier, since they have broken down so many that are just and holy.

Weakness. — The whole employment of men is to gain wealth; yet they have no title to show that they justly possess it but human caprice, nor have they power to hold it securely. It is the same with knowledge, of which disease deprives us. We are incapable both of truth and of goodness.

The Swiss are offended if they are called noble, and bring proof of their plebeian race that they may be judged worthy of office.

When the question is of judging whether we ought to make war and kill so many men, condemning so many Spaniards to death, there is only one man who is the judge, and he an interested party; there ought to be a third, and he disinterested.

"Why do you kill me? — What! Do not you live on the other side of the stream, my friend? If you lived on this side I should be an assassin, and it were unjust to kill you in this fashion, but since you live on the other side, I am a brave soldier, and it is just."

Justice, Power. — It is just that what is just should be obeyed, it is of necessity that what is strongest should be obeyed.

Justice without power is unavailing, power without justice is tyrannical. Justice without power is gainsaid, because the wicked always exist, power without justice

is condemned. We must therefore combine justice and power, making what is just strong, and what is strong just.

Justice is subject to dispute, power is easily recognised and cannot be disputed. Thus we cannot give power to justice, because power has arraigned justice, saying that justice is unjust, and she herself truly just; so since we are unable to bring about that what is just should be strong, we have made the strong just.

The sole universal rules are the laws of the country in ordinary affairs, and the law of the majority in others. And this comes from the power which is in them.

Thus it comes that kings, whose power is of another kind, do not follow the majority of their ministers.

No doubt equality of goods is just, but since they are unable to bring about that power should obey justice, people have judged it right to obey power; not being able to add power to justice they have justified power, so that justice and power should coalesce, and peace, the sovereign good, result.

Do we follow the majority because they have more reason? No; but because they have more power.

Do we follow ancient laws and opinions because they are more sound? No; but because they stand alone and take from us the root of diversity.

Summum jus, summa injuria.

The way of the majority is the best way, because it is plain, and has power to make itself obeyed; yet it is the opinion of the least able.

If men could have done so, they would have placed power in the hands of justice, since we cannot deal with power as we please, because it is a tangible quality, while justice is a spiritual quality of which we dispose as we please, they have placed justice in the hands of power, and thus that is called just which we are forced to obey.

Thence arises the right of the sword, for the sword gives a true right.

Otherwise we should see violence on one side and justice on the other. The end of the twelfth *Provincial*.

Thence the injustice of the Fronde, which raises its so-called justice against power.

It is not the same in the Church, for there is true justice and no violence.

Injustice. — That presumption should be joined to insignificance is extreme injustice.

Tyranny consists in the desire of universal rule outside its sphere.

There are different societies, in which are the strong, the fair, the judicious, the devout, in which each man rules at home, not elsewhere. Sometimes they meet, and the strong and the fair contend for the mastery, foolishly, for their mastery is each in a different kind. They do not agree, and their fault is that each aims at universal dominion. None can obtain this, not even power, which is of no avail in the realm of the wise; she is only mistress of our external actions.

Tyranny. — Thus the following expressions are false and tyrannical: "I am beautiful, therefore I should be feared; I am strong, therefore I should be loved. I am...."

Tyranny is the wishing to have in one way what can only be had in another. Divers duties are owing to divers merits, the duty of love to the pleasant, of fear to the strong, of belief to the wise.

These duties should be paid, it is unjust to refuse them, unjust also to require others. In the same way it is false and tyrannous to say, "He is not strong, therefore I will not esteem him; he is not clever, therefore I will not fear him."

It is necessary that men should be unequal. True; but that being granted, the door is open, not only to the greatest domination, but to the greatest tyranny.

It is necessary to relax the mind a little, but that opens the door to extreme dissipation.

We must mark the limits. — There are no fixed boundaries in these matters, law wishes to impose them, but the mind will not bear them.

Mine, Thine.— "This is my dog," say poor children, "that is my place in the sunshine." Here is the beginning and the image of the usurpation of the whole earth.

Good birth is a great advantage, for it gives a man a chance at the age of eighteen, making him known and respected as an ordinary man is on his merits at fifty. Here are thirty years gained at a stroke.

It is the result of power and not of custom. For those who are able to originate are few, the greater number will only follow, and refuse glory to those inventors who seek it by their inventions. And if they persist in wishing to gain glory, and in despising those who do not originate, the others will give them ridicule and would fain give them blows. Let no one then pride himself on this subtle capacity, or else let him keep his content to himself.

The reason of effects. — It is strange that men would not have me honour a man clothed in brocade, and followed by seven or eight footmen! Yet he will have them give me the strap if I do not salute him. This custom is a power. It is the same with a horse in fine trappings compared with another. It is odd that Montaigne does not see what difference there is, wonders that we find any, and asks the reason. "Indeed," he says, "how comes it," etc....

When power attacks craft, when a mere soldier takes the square cap of a first president, and flings it out of the window.

Injustice. — Men have found no means to gratify their sensuality without wrong to others.

The greatness of man even in his sensuality, to have known how to extract from it an admirable code, and to have drawn from it a picture of love to others.

Greatness. — The reasons of effects mark the greatness of man, in having formed so fair an order out of sensuality.

The reason of effects. — Sensuality and power are the source of all our actions; sensuality causes those which are voluntary, power the involuntary.

From sensuality men have found and drawn excellent rules of policy, of morals, and of justice.

But after all, this evil root of man, this *figmentum malum*, is only hidden, it is not removed.

All men by nature hate each other. They have used sensuality as best they could to make it serve the public weal, but this is only a feint, and a false image of charity, for at bottom it is but hate.

To pity the unfortunate is not contrary to sensuality, rather is it easy to render this evidence of friendship, and to gain the reputation of a tender heart, without giving.

The people have very sound opinions, for instance:

1. In having preferred diversion and hunting to poetry. The half educated deride this, and are triumphant over the folly of the world, but the people are right by a reason which the others do not understand.

2. In distinguishing men by outward marks, as birth or wealth. The world is again triumphant in showing how unreasonable this is, yet it is thoroughly

reasonable. Savages laugh at an infant king.

3. In taking offence at a blow, or in desiring glory so strongly.

But it is very desirable, on account of the other essential goods which are joined to it, and a man who has received a blow without resenting it is overwhelmed with abuse and indignity.

4. In working for an uncertainty, in going on a sea voyage, in walking over a plank.

Sound opinions of the people. — Civil wars are the greatest of all evils. They are certain, if we try to reward desert, for all will say they deserve. The evil to fear from a fool who succeeds by right of birth, is neither so great nor so certain.

Sound opinions of the people. — To be well dressed is not altogether foolish, for it proves that a great number of people work for us. It shows by our hair, that we have a valet, a perfumer, etc.; by our band, our thread, our trimming, etc. Now it is not merely superficial nor simply outward show to have many arms at our disposal.

The more arms we have the stronger we are. To be well dressed is to show our power.

The reason of effects. — Continual alternation of *pro* and *con.*

We have then shown that man is frivolous, by the estimation he has of non-essentials. And all these opinions are destroyed. We have next shown that all these opinions were perfectly sound, and that thus all these frivolities being well founded, the people are not so frivolous as is said. And thus we have destroyed the opinion which destroyed that of the people.

But we must now destroy this last proposition, and show that it remains always true that the people are frivolous, though its opinions are sound, because it does not feel the truth where it is, and placing it where it is not, its opinions are always very false and very unsound.

The reason of effects. — It is, then, true to say that all men are under an illusion, for even though the opinions of the people be sound, they are not so as they hold them, for they think that truth is where it is not. Truth is indeed in their opinions, but not at the point where they imagine it.

Thus, it is true that we should honour men of birth, but not because good birth is in itself an advantage, etc.

The reason of effects. — Gradation. The people honours persons of high birth. The half-educated despise them, saying that birth is not a personal, but a chance advantage. The educated honour them, not from the motives of the people, but from another motive. Devout persons of more zeal than knowledge despise them, in spite of that consideration which makes them honoured by the educated, because they judge by a new light arising from their piety. But true Christians honour them by a still higher light. So there is a succession of opinions for and against, according to the measure of our light.

How rightly do men distinguish by exterior rather than by interior qualities! Which of us twain shall take the lead? Who will give place to the other? The least able? But I am as able as he is. We should have to fight about that. He has four footmen, and I have but one; that is something which can be seen; there is nothing to do but to count; it is my place to yield, and I am a fool if I contest it. So by this means we remain at peace, the greatest of all blessings.

Deference is shown by submitting to personal inconvenience. This is apparently foolish but really just, for it is to say, "I would certainly put myself to inconvenience did you need it, since I do so when it can be of no service to you." Respect, moreover, is for the purpose of marking distinctions of rank. Now if it showed respect to be seated in an arm-chair, we should pay respect to every body,

and thus no distinction would be made, but being put to inconvenience we distinguish very well.

The reason of effects. — We should keep our own secret thoughts, and judge of all by those, while speaking like every one else.

King and tyrant. — I too will have my secret thoughts. I will take care on every journey.

The reason of effects. — Epictetus. Those who say "You have a headache," this is not the same thing. We are assured of health, and not of justice, and indeed his own was folly.

Yet he believed it demonstrable when he said, "it is either in our power or it is not."

But he did not see that it is not in our power to regulate the heart, and he was wrong to draw this conclusion from the fact that some were Christians.

The reason of effects. — It is owing to the weakness of man that so many things are esteemed beautiful, as to be well skilled in playing the lute.

It is only an evil because of our weakness.

THE WEAKNESS, UNREST, AND

DEFECTS OF MAN.



The Misery of Man. — We care nothing for the present. We anticipate the future as too slow in coming, as if we could make it move faster; or we call back the past, to stop its rapid flight. So imprudent are we that we wander through the times in which we have no part, unthinking of that which alone is ours; so frivolous are we that we dream of the days which are not, and pass by without reflection those which alone exist. For the present generally gives us pain; we conceal it from our sight because it afflicts us, and if it be pleasant we regret to see it vanish away. We endeavour to sustain the present by the future, and think of arranging things not in our power, for a time at which we have no certainty of arriving.

If we examine our thoughts, we shall find them always occupied with the past or the future. We scarcely think of the present, and if we do so, it is only that we may borrow light from it to direct the future. The present is never our end; the past and the present are our means, the future alone is our end. Thus we never live, but hope to live, and while we always lay ourselves out to be happy, it is inevitable that we can never be so.

We are so unhappy that we cannot take pleasure in a thing, save on condition of being troubled if it turn out ill, as a thousand things may do, and do every hour. He who should find the secret of rejoicing in good without being troubled at its contrary evil, would have hit the mark. It is perpetual motion.

Our nature exists by motion; perfect rest is death.

When we are well we wonder how we should get on if we were sick, but when sickness comes we take our medicine cheerfully, into that the evil resolves itself. We have no longer those passions and that desire for amusement and gadding abroad, which were ours in health, but are now incompatible with the necessities of our disease. So then nature gives us passions and desires in accordance with the immediate situation. Nothing troubles us but fears, which we, and not nature, make for ourselves, because fear adds to the condition in which we are the passions of the condition in which we are not.

Since nature makes us always unhappy in every condition, our desires paint for us a happy condition, joining to that in which we are, the pleasures of the condition in which we are not, and were we to gain these pleasures we should not therefore be happy, because we should have other desires conformable to this new estate.

We must particularize this general proposition....

What difference in point of obedience is there between a soldier and a Carthusian? For both are alike under rule and dependent, both engaged in equally irksome labours. But the soldier always hopes to bear rule, and though he never does so, for even captains and princes are always slaves and dependents, he ever hopes and ever works to attain mastery, whereas the Carthusian makes a vow never to be aught else than dependent. Thus they do not differ in their perpetual servitude, which is the same always for both, but in the hope which one always has, the other never.

The example of Alexander's chastity has not made so many continent as that of his drunkenness has made intemperate. It is not shameful to be less virtuous than he, and it seems excusable to be no more vicious. We do not think ourselves wholly partakers in the vices of ordinary men, when we see that we share those of the great, not considering that in such matters the great are but ordinary men. We hold on to them by the same end by which they hold on to the people, for at

whatsoever height they be, they are yet united at some point to the lowest of mankind. They are not suspended in the air, abstracted from our society. No, doubly no; if they are greater than we, it is because their heads are higher; but their feet are as low as ours. There all are on the same level, resting on the same earth, and by the lower extremity are as low as we are, as the meanest men, as children, and the brutes.

Great men and little have the same accidents, the same tempers, the same passions, but one is on the felloe of the wheel, the other near the axle, and so less agitated by the same revolutions.

Would he who had enjoyed the friendship of the King of England, the King of Poland, and the Queen of Sweden have thought he should come to want, and need a retreat or shelter in the world?

Man is full of wants, and cares only for those who can satisfy them all. “Such an one is a good mathematician,” it is said. But I have nothing to do with mathematics, he would take me for a proposition. “This other is a good soldier.” He would treat me as a besieged city. I need then an honourable man who can lend himself generally to all my wants.

Men say that eclipses presage misfortune, because misfortunes are common, so that as evil often happens they often divine it; whereas to say that they presage happiness would often prove false. They attribute happiness only to rare planetary conjunctions, and thus they seldom fail in their divination.

We are fools if we rest content with the society of those like ourselves; miserable as we are, powerless as we are, they will not aid us, we shall die alone. We ought therefore to act as though we were alone, and should we in that case

build superb mansions, etc.? We should search for truth unhesitatingly, and if we refuse it, we show that we value the esteem of men more than the search for truth.

The last act is tragic, how pleasantly soever the play may have run through the others. At the end a little earth is flung on our head, and all is over for ever.

I feel that I might not have been, for the 'I' consists in my thought; therefore I, who think, had not been had my mother been killed before I had life. So I am not a necessary being. Neither am I eternal nor infinite, but I see plainly there is in nature a necessary being, eternal and infinite.

As duchies, kingships, and magistracies are real and necessary, because power rules all, these exist every where and always. But since it is only caprice which makes one or another duke or king, the rule is not constant, and may vary, etc.

Cromwell was about to ravage the whole of Christendom, the royal family had been brought to nought, and his own dynasty for ever established, but for a little grain of sand in his bladder. Rome herself began to tremble under him, but this scrap of gravel having got there, he dies, his family falls from power, peace is established, and the king restored.

Scepticism. — Excessive or deficient mental powers are alike accused of madness. Nothing is good but mediocrity. The majority has settled that, and assails whoever escapes it, no matter by which extreme. I make no objection, would willingly consent to be in the mean, and I refuse to be placed at the lower end, not because it is low, but because it is an extreme, for I would equally refuse to be placed at the top. To leave the mean is to leave humanity. The greatness of the human soul consists in knowing how to keep the mean. So little is it the case that greatness consists in leaving it, that it lies in not leaving it.

Discourses on humility give occasion for pride to the boastful, and for humility to the humble. Those on scepticism give occasion for believers to affirm. Few men speak humbly of humility, chastely of chastity, few of scepticism doubtingly. We are but falsehood, duplicity and contradiction, using even to ourselves concealment and guile.

There are vices which only take hold of us by means of others, and these, like branches, fall with the removal of the trunk.

For we must not mistake ourselves, we have as much that is automatic in us as intellectual, and hence it comes that the instrument by which persuasion is brought about is not demonstration alone. How few things are demonstrated! Proofs can only convince the mind; custom makes our strongest proofs and those which we hold most firmly, it sways the automaton, which draws the unconscious intellect after it. Who has demonstrated that there will be a to-morrow, or that we shall die; yet what is more universally believed? It is then custom that convinces us of it, custom that makes so many men Christians, custom that makes them Turks, heathen, artisans, soldiers, etc. Lastly, we must resort to custom when once the mind has seen where truth is, in order to slake our thirst, and steep ourselves in that belief, which escapes us at every hour, for to have proofs always at hand were too onerous. We must acquire a more easy belief, that of custom, which without violence, without art, without argument, causes our assent and inclines all our powers to this belief, so that our soul naturally falls into it. It is not enough to believe only by force of conviction if the automaton is inclined to believe the contrary. Both parts of us then must be obliged to believe, the intellect by arguments which it is enough to have admitted once in our lives, the automaton by custom, and by not allowing it to incline in the contrary direction. *Inclina cor meum, Deus.*

The intellect believes naturally, and the will loves naturally, so that for lack of true objects, they must needs attach themselves to the false.

Eritis sicut dii, scientes bonum et malum. — Every one plays the god in judging whether anything be good or bad, and in being too much afflicted or rejoiced at circumstances.

Even if people have no interest in what they say, it must not therefore be certainly concluded they are not lying, for there are those who lie simply for lying's sake.

Men are of necessity so mad, that not to be mad were madness in another form.

We cannot think of Plato and Aristotle, save in professorial robes. They were honest men like others, laughing with their friends, and when they amused themselves with writing the *Laws* or the *Politics*, they did it as a pastime. That part of their life was the least philosophic and the least serious; the most philosophic was to live simply and quietly. If they wrote on politics it was as though they were laying down rules for a madhouse, and if they made as though they were speaking of a great matter, it was because they knew that the madmen to whom they spoke fancied themselves kings and emperors. They entered into their views in order to make their folly as little harmful as possible.

The most important affair in life is the choice of a trade, yet chance decides it. Custom makes men masons, soldiers, tilers. "He is a good tiler," says one, "and soldiers are fools." But others: "There is nothing great but war, all but soldiers are rogues." We choose our professions according as we hear this or that praised or despised in our childhood, for we naturally love truth and hate folly. These words move us, the only fault is in their application. So great is the force of custom that out of those who by nature are only men, are made all conditions of men. For

some countries are full of masons, others of soldiers, etc. Nature is certainly not so uniform. Custom then produces this effect and gains ascendency over nature, yet sometimes nature gets the upper hand, and obliges man to act by instinct in spite of all custom, whether good or bad.

Men by nature are tilers and of all callings, except in their own closets.

We never teach men to be gentlemen, but we teach them everything else, and they never pique themselves so much on all the rest as on knowing how to be gentlemen. They pique themselves only on knowing the one thing they have not learnt.

People should not be able to say of a man, he is a mathematician, or a preacher, or eloquent, but he is a gentleman; that universal quality alone pleases me. — When you think of a man's book as soon as you see himself, it is a bad sign. I would rather that none of his qualities should be recognised till you meet them, or have occasion to avail yourself of them. *Ne quid nimis*, for fear some one quality gain the mastery and stamp the man. Let not people think of him as an orator, unless oratory be in question, then let them think of it.

No man passes in the world as an expert in verse unless he hang out the sign of a poet, a mathematician, etc. But people who are generally accomplished need no sign and scarce recognise any difference between the trade of a poet and that of an embroiderer.

People of general accomplishment are not called poets or geometricians, etc., though they are so, and judges of all these. You do not guess what they are. When they enter a society they join in the general conversation. They do not exhibit one quality rather than another, except when they have to make use of it. Then we remember it, for it is natural to such characters that we do not say of them that

they are fine speakers when it is not a question of oratory, and that we give them the praise of eloquence if occasion call for it.

It is false praise then to say of a man as soon as he enters a society that he is a clever poet, and it is a bad sign when a man is never called on to give his opinion on such a subject as verse.

Inconstancy. — Things have different qualities, and the soul different inclinations; for nothing is simple which presents itself to the soul, and the soul never presents itself simply to any subject. Hence it comes that men laugh and weep at the same thing.

Greatness of establishment, respect for establishment.

The pleasure of the great is to be able to make people happy.

The property of riches is to be given liberally.

The property of each thing should be sought out. The property of power is to protect.

Saint Augustine saw that we labour for an uncertainty, at sea, in a battle, etc.; he did not see the doctrine of chances, which demonstrates that we must do so. Montaigne saw that we are disgusted at a distorted mind, and that custom can do all things, but he did not see the reason of that effect.

All these men saw the effects, but did not see the causes; in relation to those who have discovered the causes they are as those who have only eyes are in regard to those who have intellect. For the effects are as it were sensible, and the causes are visible only to the intellect. And though these effects too are apprehended through reason, yet is it in relation to the reason which apprehends causes, as the bodily senses are to the intellect.

Suppose a man puts himself at a window to see the passers by. If I pass I cannot say that he stood there to see me, for he does not think of me in particular.

Nor does any one who loves another on account of beauty really love that person, for the small-pox, which kills beauty without killing the person, will cause the loss of love. Nor does one who loves me for my judgment, my memory, love me, myself, for I may lose those qualities without losing my identity. Where then is this 'I' if it reside not in the body nor in the soul, and how love the body or the soul, except for the qualities which do not make '*me*,' since they are perishable? For it is not possible and it would be unjust to love the soul of a person in the abstract, and whatever qualities might be therein. So then we do not love a person, but only qualities. We should not then sneer at those who are honoured on account of rank and office, for we love no one save for borrowed qualities.

Time heals all pain and misunderstanding, because we change and are no longer the same persons. Neither the offender nor the offended are any more themselves. It is like a nation which we have angered and meet again after two generations. They are Frenchmen still, but not the same.

Inconstancy and singularity. — To live only by labour, and to reign over the most powerful state in the world, are very opposite things. They are united in the person of the grand Sultan of the Turks.

It pleases us to say 'Prince' to a king, because it lessens his quality.

Epigrams of Martial. — Men like malice, but not against one-eyed men, nor against the unfortunate, but against the fortunate and proud. Those who think otherwise make a mistake.

For concupiscence is the source of all our movements, and humanity, etc.

We must please those whose feelings are humane and tender.

That epigram about the two one-eyed people is valueless, for it brings them no consolation, and only gives a point to the author's glory. All that is merely for the sake of the author is valueless. *Ambitiosa recidet ornamenta.*

I put it down as a fact that if all men knew what each said of the other, there would not be four friends in the world. This is evident from the quarrels which arise from indiscreet reports made from time to time.

Those who are always hopeful in adversity, and rejoice in good luck, are suspected of being glad of failure should they not be correspondingly depressed under bad luck; they are delighted to find pretexts for hoping, in order to show that they are interested, and to hide by the joy they pretend to feel that which they really feel at the ill success of the affair.

Malignity when it has reason on its side becomes proud, and displays reason in all its splendour.

If austerity or a rigid choice have not found the true good, and we must needs return to follow nature, it becomes proud by reason of this return.

A maker of epigrams, — a bad man.

Do you wish men to believe good of you? Then say none.

We ought to be much obliged to those who tell us of our faults, for they mortify us, they teach us we have been despised, they do not prevent our being so in the future, for we have many other faults which are despicable. They prepare for us the exercise of correction, and freedom from a fault.

If we would reprove with success, and show another his mistake, we must see from what side he views the matter, for on that side it is generally true, and admitting that truth, show him the side on which it is false. He will be satisfied, for he will see that he was not mistaken, only that he did not see all sides. Now, no one is vexed at not seeing every thing. But we do not like to be mistaken, and

that perhaps arises from the fact that man by nature cannot see everything, and that by nature he cannot be mistaken in the side he looks at, since what we apprehend by our senses is always true.

I passed a long time in the study of the abstract sciences, and was much discouraged at finding how few were my fellow-students. When I began the study of man I saw that these abstract sciences were not fit for him, and that I was wandering more from my true state in investigating them, than others in ignoring them. I forgave their scanty knowledge. But I thought at least to find many fellow-students in the study of man, and that this was the real study which befits us. I was deceived, for there are still fewer than those who study mathematics. It is only for want of knowing how to pursue this study that we seek others. But is it not that even here is not the knowledge that man should have, and that it is better for him to be ignorant of himself in order to be happy?

The Vanity of Knowledge. — The knowledge of external things will not console me for my ignorance of ethics in time of affliction, but the science of morals will always console me for my ignorance of external knowledge.

There are plants on the earth, we see them, but they could not be seen from the moon. On these plants are hairs, and in these hairs tiny animals, but beyond that, nothing more. O, presumption! Compound bodies are made up of elements, but not the elementary bodies themselves. O presumption! Here is a fine distinction. We must not assert the existence of what we cannot see, we must then say what others say, but not think with them.

The world's judgment is right, for it is in that condition of natural ignorance which is man's best wisdom. The sciences have two extremes which meet. The first is that pure natural ignorance in which every man is born. The other extreme is that reached by great minds, who having run through all that men can know,

find that they know nothing, and again come round to the same ignorance from which they started; but this is a learned ignorance, conscious of itself. Those between the two, who have left their natural ignorance and not been able to reach the other, have some tincture of this vain knowledge, and assume to be wise. These trouble the world, and judge all things falsely. The people and the wise make up the world; these despise it, and are despised; they judge ill of all things, and the world rightly judges of them.

Nature has made all her truths self-contained. Our art encloses them one within another, but that is not according to nature. Each holds its own place.

Spongia solis. — When we see the same effect invariably recur we conclude there is in it a natural necessity, as that there will be a to-morrow, etc. But nature often gives us the lie, and will not subject herself to her own rules.

Nature always begins the same things again, years, days, and hours, and in like manner spaces and numbers follow each other, end without end. So is made a sort of infinity and eternity, not that any thing of these is infinite and eternal, but these finite entities are infinitely multiplied.

Thus as it seems to me the number which multiplies them alone is infinite.

Nature imitates herself. A seed sown in good ground brings forth fruit. A principle cast into a good mind brings forth fruit.

Numbers imitate space, which is of an wholly different nature.

All is made and guided by one and the same master, root, branch and fruits; principles and consequences.

Nature works by progress, *itus et reditus*. It goes and returns, then it goes further, then twice as much backwards, then more forward than ever, etc.

So is it with the tide of the sea, and so apparently with the course of the sun.

Every one is all in all to himself, for he being dead, all is dead to him. Hence it comes that each man believes that he is all to all. We ought not to judge of nature by ourselves, but by it.

Self is hateful. You Miton, conceal self, but do not thereby destroy it, therefore you are still hateful.

— Not so, for in acting as we do, to oblige every body, we give no reason for hating us. — True, if we only hated in self the vexation which it causes us.

But if I hate it because it is unjust, and because it makes itself the centre of all, I shall always hate it.

In one word Self has two qualities, it is unjust in its essence because it makes itself the centre of all, it is inconvenient to others, in that it would bring them into subjection, for each 'I' is the enemy, and would fain be the tyrant of all others. You take away the inconvenience, but not the injustice, and thus you do not render it loveable to those who hate injustice; you render it loveable only to the unjust, who find in it an enemy no longer. Thus you remain unjust and can please none but the unjust.

Of Self-love. — The nature of self-love and of this human 'I' is to love self only, and consider self only. But what can it do? It cannot prevent the object it loves from being full of faults and miseries; man would fain be great and sees that he is little, would fain be happy, and sees that he is miserable, would fain be perfect, and sees that he is full of imperfections, would fain be the object of the love and esteem of men, and sees that his faults merit only their aversion and contempt. The embarrassment wherein he finds himself produces in him the most unjust and criminal passion imaginable, for he conceives a mortal hatred against that truth which blames him and convinces him of his faults. Desiring to annihilate it, yet unable to destroy it in its essence, he destroys it as much as he can in his own knowledge, and in that of others; that is to say, he devotes all his

care to the concealment of his faults, both from others and from himself, and he can neither bear that others should show them to him, nor that they should see them.

It is no doubt an evil to be full of faults, but it is a greater evil to be full of them, yet unwilling to recognise them, because that is to add the further fault of a voluntary illusion. We do not like others to deceive us, we do not think it just in them to require more esteem from us than they deserve; it is therefore unjust that we should deceive them, desiring more esteem from them than we deserve.

Thus if they discover no more imperfections and vices in us than we really have, it is plain they do us no wrong, since it is not they who cause them; but rather they do us a service, since they help us to deliver ourselves from an evil, the ignorance of these imperfections. We ought not to be troubled that they know our faults and despise us, since it is but just they should know us as we are, and despise us if we are despicable.

Such are the sentiments which would arise in a heart full of equity and justice. What should we say then of our own heart, finding in it an wholly contrary disposition? For is it not true that we hate truth, and those who tell it us, and that we would wish them to have an erroneously favourable opinion of us, and to esteem us other than indeed we are?

One proof of this fills me with dismay. The Catholic religion does not oblige us to tell out our sins indiscriminately to all, it allows us to remain hidden from men in general, but she excepts one alone, to whom she commands us to open the very depths of our heart, and to show ourselves to him as we are. There is but this one man in the world whom she orders us to undeceive; she binds him to an inviolable secrecy, so that this knowledge is to him as though it were not. We can imagine nothing more charitable and more tender. Yet such is the corruption of man, that he finds even this law harsh, and it is one of the main reasons which has set a large portion of Europe in revolt against the Church.

How unjust and unreasonable is the human heart which finds it hard to be obliged to do in regard to one man what in some degree it were just to do to all

men. For is it just that we should deceive them?

There are different degrees in this dislike to the truth, but it may be said that all have it in some degree, for it is inseparable from self-love. This false delicacy causes those who must needs reprove others to choose so many windings and modifications in order to avoid shocking them. They must needs lessen our faults, seem to excuse them, mix praises with their blame, give evidences of affection and esteem. Yet this medicine is always bitter to self-love, which takes as little as it can, always with disgust, often with a secret anger against those who administer it.

Hence it happens, that if any desire our love, they avoid doing us a service which they know to be disagreeable; they treat us as we would wish to be treated: we hate the truth, and they hide it from us; we wish to be flattered, they flatter us; we love to be deceived, they deceive us.

Thus each degree of good fortune which raises us in the world removes us further from truth, because we fear most to wound those whose affection is most useful, and whose dislike is most dangerous. A prince may be the by-word of all Europe, yet he alone know nothing of it. I am not surprised; to speak the truth is useful to whom it is spoken, but disadvantageous to those who speak it, since it makes them hated. Now those who live with princes love their own interests more than that of the prince they serve, and thus they take care not to benefit him so as to do themselves a disservice.

This misfortune is, no doubt, greater and more common in the higher classes, but lesser men are not exempt from it, since there is always an interest in making men love us. Thus human life is but a perpetual illusion, an interchange of deceit and flattery. No one speaks of us in our presence as in our absence. The society of men is founded on this universal deceit: few friendships would last if every man knew what his friend said of him behind his back, though he then spoke in sincerity and without passion.

Man is then only disguise, falsehood, and hypocrisy, both in himself and with regard to others. He will not be told the truth, he avoids telling it to others, and all

these tendencies, so far removed from justice and reason, have their natural roots in his heart.

THE HAPPINESS OF MAN WITH GOD; OR, THAT THE SCRIPTURE SHOWS A REDEEMER.



PREFACE TO THE SECOND PART.



TO SPEAK OF those who have treated of this subject.

I wonder at the boldness with which these persons undertake to speak of God, in addressing their words to the irreligious. Their first chapter is to prove Divinity by the works of nature. I should not be astonished at their undertaking if they addressed their argument to the faithful, for it is certain that those who have a lively faith in their heart see at once that all that exists is none other than the work of the God whom they adore. But for those in whom this light is extinguished, and in whom we desire to revive it, men destitute of faith and grace who, seeking with all their light whatever they see in nature to lead them to this knowledge, find only clouds and darkness, — to tell them they need only look at the smallest things which surround them in order to see God unveiled, to give them as the sole proof of this great and important subject, the course of the moon and planets, and to say that with such an argument we have accomplished the proof; is to give them ground for belief that the proofs of our Religion are very feeble. Indeed I see by reason and experience that nothing is more fitted to excite contempt.

Not after this fashion speaks the Scripture, which knows better than we the things of God. It says, on the contrary, that God is a God who hides himself, and that since nature became corrupt, he has left men in a blindness from which they can only escape by Jesus Christ, and except through him we are cut off from all communication with God. *Nemo novit Patrem, nisi Filius, et cui voluerit Filius revelare.*

This is what Scripture indicates when it says in so many places that those who seek God find him. It is not of a light like the sun at noonday that they thus speak. No one says that those who seek the sun at noonday, or water in the sea shall find

them, and thus it follows that the evidence for God is not of that kind. Therefore it says to us elsewhere: *Vere tu es Deus absconditus*.

The metaphysical proofs of God are so apart from man's reason, and so complicated that they are but little striking, and if they are of use to any, it is only during the moment that the demonstration is before them, but an hour afterwards they fear they have been mistaken.

Quod curiositate cognoverint, superbia amiserunt.

Such is the outcome of the knowledge of God gained without Jesus Christ, for this is to communicate without a mediator with the God whom they have known without a mediator.

Instead of which those who have known God by a mediator know their own wretchedness.

Jesus Christ is the goal of all, and the centre to which all tends. Who knows him knows the reason of all things.

Those who go astray only do so from failing to see one of these two things. It is then possible to know God without knowing our wretchedness, and to know our wretchedness without knowing God; but we cannot know Jesus Christ without knowing at the same time God and our wretchedness.

Therefore I do not here undertake to prove by natural reasons either the existence of God or the Trinity, or the immortality of the soul, nor anything of that sort, not only because I do not feel myself strong enough to find in nature proofs to convince hardened atheists, but also, because this knowledge without Jesus Christ is useless and barren. Though a man should be persuaded that the proportions of numbers are immaterial truths, eternal, and dependent on a first truth in whom they subsist, and who is called God, I should not consider him far advanced towards his salvation.

The God of Christians is not a God who is simply the author of mathematical truths, or of the order of the elements, as is the god of the heathen and of

Epicureans. Nor is he merely a God who providentially disposes the life and fortunes of men, to crown his worshippers with length of happy years. Such was the portion of the Jews. But the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, the God of Christians, is a God of love and consolation, a God who fills the souls and hearts of his own, a God who makes them feel their inward wretchedness, and his infinite mercy, who unites himself to their inmost spirit, filling it with humility and joy, with confidence and love, rendering them incapable of any end other than himself.

All who seek God apart from Jesus Christ, and who rest in nature, find no light to satisfy them, but form for themselves a means of knowing God and serving him without a mediator. Thus they fall either into atheism, or into deism, two things which the Christian religion almost equally abhors.

The God of Christians is a God who makes the soul perceive that he is her only good, that her only rest is in him, her only joy in loving him; who makes her at the same time abhor the obstacles which withhold her from loving him with all her strength. Her two hindrances, self-love and lust, are insupportable to her. This God makes her perceive that the root of self-love destroys her, and that he alone can heal.

The knowledge of God without that of our wretchedness creates pride. The knowledge of our wretchedness without that of God creates despair. The knowledge of Jesus Christ is the middle way, because in him we find both God and our wretchedness.

OF THE NEED OF SEEKING TRUTH.



SECOND PART. THAT man without faith cannot know the true good, nor justice.

All men seek happiness. To this there is no exception, what different means soever they employ, all tend to this goal. The reason that some men go to the wars and others avoid them is but the same desire attended in each with different views. Our will makes no step but towards this object. This is the motive of every action of every man, even of him who hangs himself.

And yet after so many years, no one without faith has arrived at the point to which all eyes are turned. All complain, princes and subjects, nobles and commons, old and young, strong and weak, learned and ignorant, sound and sick, of all countries, all times, all ages, and all conditions.

A trial so long, so constant and so uniform, should surely convince us of our inability to arrive at good by our own strength, but example teaches us but little. No resemblance is so exact but that there is some slight difference, and hence we expect that our endeavour will not be foiled on this occasion as before. Thus while the present never satisfies, experience deceives us, and from misfortune to misfortune leads us on to death, eternal crown of sorrows.

This desire, and this weakness cry aloud to us that there was once in man a true happiness, of which there now remains to him but the mark and the empty trace, which he vainly tries to fill from all that surrounds him, seeking from things absent the succour he finds not in things present; and these are all inadequate, because this infinite void can only be filled by an infinite and immutable object, that is to say, only by God himself.

He only is our true good, and since we have left him, it is strange that there is nothing in nature which has not served to take his place; neither the stars, nor heaven, earth, the elements, plants, cabbages, leeks, animals, insects, calves,

serpents, fever, pestilence, war, famine, vices, adultery, incest. And since he has lost the true good, all things can equally appear good to him, even his own destruction, though so contrary to God, to reason, and to the whole course of nature.

Some seek good in authority, others in research and knowledge, others in pleasure. Others, who indeed are nearer the truth, have considered it necessary that the universal good which all men desire should not consist in any of those particular matters which can only be possessed by one, and which if once shared, afflict their possessor more by the want of what he has not, than they gladden him by the joy of what he has. They have apprehended that the true good should be such as all may possess at once, without diminution, and without envy, and that which none can lose against his will. And their reason is that this desire being natural to man, since it exists necessarily in all, and that all must have it, they conclude from it....

Infinite, nothing. — The soul of man is cast into the body, in which it finds number, time, dimension; it reasons thereon, and calls this nature or necessity, and cannot believe aught else.

Unity joined to infinity increases it not, any more than a foot measure added to infinite space. The finite is annihilated in presence of the infinite and becomes simply nought. Thus our intellect before God, thus our justice before the divine justice. There is not so great a disproportion between our justice and that of God, as between unity and infinity.

The justice of God must be as vast as his mercy, but justice towards the reprobate is less vast, and should be less amazing than mercy towards the elect.

We know that there is an infinite, but are ignorant of its nature. As we know it to be false that numbers are finite, it must therefore be true that there is an infinity in number, but what this is we know not. It can neither be odd nor even, for the addition of an unit can make no change in the nature of number; yet it is a

number, and every number is either odd or even, at least this is understood of every finite number.

Thus we may well know that there is a God, without knowing what he is.

We know then the existence and the nature of the finite, because we also are finite and have dimension.

We know the existence of the infinite, and are ignorant of its nature, because it has dimension like us, but not limits like us. But we know neither the existence nor the nature of God, because he has neither dimension nor limits.

But by faith we know his existence, by glory we shall know his nature. Now I have already shown that we can know well the existence of a thing without knowing its nature.

Let us now speak according to the light of nature.

If there be a God, he is infinitely incomprehensible, since having neither parts nor limits he has no relation to us. We are then incapable of knowing either what he is or if he is. This being so, who will dare to undertake the solution of the question? Not we, who have no relation to him.

Who then will blame Christians for not being able to give a reason for their faith; those who profess a religion for which they cannot give a reason? They declare in putting it forth to the world that it is a foolishness, *stultitiam*, and then you complain that they do not prove it. Were they to prove it they would not keep their word, it is in lacking proof that they are not lacking in sense. — Yes, but although this excuses those who offer it as such, and takes away from them the blame of putting it forth without reason, it does not excuse those who receive it. — Let us then examine this point, and say "God is, or he is not." But to which side shall we incline? Reason can determine nothing about it. There is an infinite gulf fixed between us. A game is playing at the extremity of this infinite distance in which heads or tails may turn up. What will you wager? There is no reason for backing either one or the other, you cannot reasonably argue in favour of either.

Do not then accuse of error those who have already chosen, for you know nothing about it. — No, but I blame them for having made, not this choice, but a

choice, for again both the man who calls ‘heads’ and his adversary are equally to blame, they are both in the wrong; the true course is not to wager at all. —

Yes, but you must wager; this depends not on your will, you are embarked in the affair. Which will you choose? Let us see. Since you must choose, let us see which least interests you. You have two things to lose, truth and good, and two things to stake, your reason and your will, your knowledge and your happiness; and your nature has two things to avoid, error and misery. Since you must needs choose, your reason is no more wounded in choosing one than the other. Here is one point cleared up, but what of your happiness? Let us weigh the gain and the loss in choosing heads that God is. Let us weigh the two cases: if you gain, you gain all; if you lose, you lose nothing. Wager then unhesitatingly that he is. — You are right. Yes, I must wager, but I may stake too much. — Let us see. Since there is an equal chance of gain and loss, if you had only to gain two lives for one, you might still wager. But were there three of them to gain, you would have to play, since needs must that you play, and you would be imprudent, since you must play, not to chance your life to gain three at a game where the chances of loss or gain are even. But there is an eternity of life and happiness. And that being so, were there an infinity of chances of which one only would be for you, you would still be right to stake one to win two, and you would act foolishly, being obliged to play, did you refuse to stake one life against three at a game in which out of an infinity of chances there be one for you, if there were an infinity of an infinitely happy life to win. But there is here an infinity of an infinitely happy life to win, a chance of gain against a finite number of chances of loss, and what you stake is finite; that is decided. Wherever the infinite exists and there is not an infinity of chances of loss against that of gain, there is no room for hesitation, you must risk the whole. Thus when a man is forced to play he must renounce reason to keep life, rather than hazard it for infinite gain, which is as likely to happen as the loss of nothingness.

For it is of no avail to say it is uncertain that we gain, and certain that we risk, and that the infinite distance between the certainty of that which is staked and the

uncertainty of what we shall gain, equals the finite good which is certainly staked against an uncertain infinite. This is not so. Every gambler stakes a certainty to gain an uncertainty, and yet he stakes a finite certainty against a finite uncertainty without acting unreasonably. It is false to say there is infinite distance between the certain stake and the uncertain gain. There is in truth an infinity between the certainty of gain and the certainty of loss. But the uncertainty of gain is proportioned to the certainty of the stake, according to the proportion of chances of gain and loss, and if therefore there are as many chances on one side as on the other, the game is even. And thus the certainty of the venture is equal to the uncertainty of the winnings, so far is it from the truth that there is infinite distance between them. So that our argument is of infinite force, if we stake the finite in a game where there are equal chances of gain and loss, and the infinite is the winnings. This is demonstrable, and if men are capable of any truths, this is one.

I confess and admit it. Yet is there no means of seeing the hands at the game? — Yes, the Scripture and the rest, etc.

— Well, but my hands are tied and my mouth is gagged: I am forced to wager and am not free, none can release me, but I am so made that I cannot believe. What then would you have me do?

True. But understand at least your incapacity to believe, since your reason leads you to belief and yet you cannot believe. Labour then to convince yourself, not by increase of the proofs of God, but by the diminution of your passions. You would fain arrive at faith, but know not the way; you would heal yourself of unbelief, and you ask remedies for it. Learn of those who have been bound as you are, but who now stake all that they possess; these are they who know the way you would follow, who are cured of a disease of which you would be cured. Follow the way by which they began, by making believe that they believed, taking the holy water, having masses said, etc. Thus you will naturally be brought to believe, and will lose your acuteness. — But that is just what I fear. — Why? what have you to lose?

But to show you that this is the right way, this it is that will lessen the passions, which are your great obstacles, etc. —

What you say comforts and delights me, etc. — If my words please you, and seem to you cogent, know that they are those of one who has thrown himself on his knees before and after to pray that Being, infinite, and without parts, to whom he submits all his own being, that you also would submit to him all yours, for your own good and for his glory, and that this strength may be in accord with this weakness.

The end of this argument. — Now what evil will happen to you in taking this side? You will be trustworthy, honourable, humble, grateful, generous, friendly, sincere, and true. In truth you will no longer have those poisoned pleasures, glory and luxury, but you will have other pleasures. I tell you that you will gain in this life, at each step you make in this path you will see so much certainty of gain, so much nothingness in what you stake, that you will know at last that you have wagered on a certainty, an infinity, for which you have risked nothing.

Objection. — Those who hope for salvation are so far happy, but they have as a counterpoise the fear of hell.

Answer. — Who has most reason to fear hell, the man who is in ignorance if there be a hell, and who is certain of damnation if there be; or he who is certainly convinced that there is a hell, and has a hope of being saved if there be?

"I would soon have given up pleasure," say they, "had I but faith." But I say to you, "you would soon have faith did you leave off your pleasures. Now it is for you to begin. If I could, I would give you faith. I cannot do this, nor discover therefore if what you say is true. But you can easily give up pleasure, and discover if what I say is true."

Probabilities. — We must live differently in the world, according to these different suppositions:

1. That we could always remain in it. 2. That it is certain we cannot remain here long, and uncertain if we shall remain here an hour. This last supposition is the case with us.

Instability. — It is horrible to feel all that we possess slipping away from us.

By the law of probabilities you are bound to take pains to seek the truth; for if you die without adoring the true source of all things you are lost. "But," say you, "had he willed that I should adore him, he would have left me tokens of his will." He has done so, but you neglect them. Seek them then, it is well worth your while.

Dungeon. — I admit that it is not necessary to fathom the opinion of Copernicus, but this:

It is all our life is worth to know if the soul be mortal or immortal.

Fascinatio nugacitatis. — In order that passion may do no hurt, we should act as though we had but a week to live.

If we ought to give a week we ought to give our whole life.

In short, what is it you promise me if not ten years of self-love spent in trying hard to please without success, besides the troubles which are certain? For ten years is the probability.

Let us imagine a number of men in chains, all condemned to death, of whom some are strangled every day in the sight of the others, while those who remain see their own condition in that of their fellows, and wait their turn looking at each other sorrowfully and without hope. This is an image of the lot of man.

We must know ourselves, and if that does not serve to discover truth, it at least serves to regulate our lives, and there is nothing more just.

There are but three classes of persons: those who having found God, serve him; those who not having found him, diligently seek him; those who not having found him, live without seeking him. The first are happy and wise, the last are unhappy and fools, those between are unhappy, but they are wise.

It is certain that there is no good without the knowledge of God, that only as we approach him are we happy, and that the ultimate good is to know him certainly; that we are unhappy in proportion as we are removed from him, and that the greatest evil would be certainty of the opposite.

The ordinary world has the power of not thinking about what it does not choose to think about. “Do not reflect on those passages about the Messiah,” said the Jew to his son. So our people often act. Thus false religions are preserved, and the true also, as regards many people.

But there are those who have not thus the power of preventing thought, and who think the more the more we forbid them. These get rid of false religions, and of the true also, if they do not find solid reasons.

If we ought to do nothing save on a certainty, we ought to do nothing for Religion, for this is not certain. But how much we do on an uncertainty, as sea voyages, battles! I say then if this be the case we ought to do nothing at all, for nothing is certain, and that there is more certainty in Religion than that we shall see another day, for it is not certain that we shall see to-morrow, but it is certainly possible that we shall not see it. We cannot say so much about Religion. It is not certain that it is, but who will dare to say that it is certainly possible that it is not? But when we work for to-morrow, therefore for the uncertain, we act reasonably.

For we should work for the uncertain by the doctrine of chances already laid down.

We know truth, not only by the reason, but also by the heart, and it is from this last that we know first principles; and reason, which has nothing to do with it, tries in vain to combat them. The sceptics who desire truth alone labour in vain. We know that we do not dream, although it is impossible to prove it by reason, and this inability shows only the weakness of our reason, and not, as they declare, the general uncertainty of our knowledge. For our knowledge of first principles, as *space*, *time*, *motion*, *number*, is as distinct as any principle derived from reason. And reason must lean necessarily on this instinctive knowledge of the heart, and must found on it every process. We know instinctively that there are three dimensions in space, and that numbers are infinite, and reason then shows that there are no two square numbers one of which is double of the other. We feel principles, we infer propositions, both with certainty, though by different ways. It is as useless and absurd for reason to demand from the heart proofs of first principles before it will admit them, as it would be for the heart to ask from reason a feeling of all the propositions demonstrated before accepting them.

This inability should serve then only to humiliate reason, which would fain judge of all things, but not to shake our certainty, as if only reason were able to instruct us. Would to God, on the contrary, that we never needed reason, and that we knew every thing by instinct and feeling! But nature has denied us this advantage, and has on the contrary given us but little knowledge of this kind, all the rest can be acquired by reason only.

Therefore those to whom God has given Religion by an instinctive feeling, are very blessed, and justly convinced. But to those who have it not we can give it only by reasoning, waiting for the time when God shall impress it on their hearts, without which faith is human only, and useless for salvation.

Those to whom God has given Religion by an instinctive feeling are very blessed, and quite convinced. But as for those who have it not, we can give it them only by reasoning, waiting for the time when God himself shall impress it on their heart, without which faith is useless for salvation.

Is then the soul too noble a subject for the feeble light of man? Let us then abase the soul to matter, and see if she knows whereof is made the very body which she animates, and those others which she contemplates and moves at her will. On this subject what have those great dogmatists known who are ignorant of nothing?

Harum sententiarum.

This would no doubt suffice if reason were reasonable. She is reasonable enough to admit that she has never found anything stable, but she does not yet despair of reaching it; on the contrary, she is as ardent as ever in the search, and is sure that she has in herself all the necessary powers for this conquest.

We must therefore make an end, and after having examined these powers in their effects, recognise what they are in themselves, and see if reason has power and grasp capable of seizing the truth.

The Preacher shows that man without God is wholly ignorant, and subject to inevitable misery. For to will and to be powerless is to be miserable. Now he wills to be happy, and to be assured of some truth, yet he can neither know, nor not desire to know. He cannot even doubt.

This is what I see and what troubles me. I look on all sides, and see nothing but obscurity, nature offers me nothing but matter for doubt and disquiet. Did I see nothing there which marked a Divinity I should decide not to believe in him. Did I see every where the marks of a Creator, I should rest peacefully in faith. But seeing too much to deny, and too little to affirm, my state is pitiful, and I have a hundred times wished that if God upheld nature, he would mark the fact

unequivocally, but that if the signs which she gives of a God are fallacious, she would wholly suppress them, that she would either say all or say nothing, that I might see what part I should take. Instead of this, in my present state, ignorant of what I am, and of what I ought to do, I know neither my condition nor my duty. My heart is wholly bent to know where is the true good in order to follow it, nothing would seem to me too costly for eternity.

THE PHILOSOPHERS.



THE PRINCIPAL ARGUMENTS of the sceptics — to omit those of less importance — are that we have no certainty of the truth of these principles apart from faith and revelation, save so far as we naturally perceive them in ourselves. Now this natural perception is no convincing evidence of their truth, since, having no certainty apart from faith, whether man was created by a good God, by an evil demon, or by chance, it may be doubted whether these principles within us are true or false or uncertain according to our origin.

And more than this: That no one has any certainty, apart from faith, whether he wake or sleep, seeing that in sleep we firmly believe we are awake, we believe that we see space, figure, and motion, we are aware of the lapse and measure of time; in a word we act as though we were awake. So that half of our life being passed in sleep, we have by our own avowal, no idea of truth, whatever we may suppose. Since then all our sentiments are illusions, who can tell but that the other half of life wherein we fancy ourselves awake be not another sleep somewhat different from the former, from which we wake when we fancy ourselves asleep?

And who doubts that if we dreamt in company, and if by chance men's dreams agreed, which is common enough, and if we were always alone when awake, we should believe that the conditions were reversed? In a word, as we often dream that we dream, and heap vision upon vision, it may well be that this life itself is but a dream, on which the others are grafted, from which we wake at death; having in our lifetime as few principles of what is good and true, as during natural sleep, the different thoughts which agitate us being perhaps only illusions like those of the flight of time and the vain fantasies of our dreams....

These are the principal arguments on one side and the other, setting aside those of less importance, such as the talk of the sceptics against the impressions of custom, education, manners, climate, and the like; and these though they influence the majority of ordinary men, who dogmatise only on vain foundations, are upset by the least breath of the sceptics. We have only to see their books if we are not convinced on this point, and we shall soon become assured of it, perhaps only too much.

I pause at the only strong point of the dogmatists, namely, that speaking sincerely and in good faith we cannot doubt of natural principles.

Against this the sceptics set in one word the uncertainty of our origin, which includes that of our nature. Which the dogmatists have been trying to answer ever since the world began.

So then war is opened among men, in which each must take a side, ranging himself either for dogmatism or for scepticism, since neutrality, which is the part of the wise, is the oldest dogma of the sceptical sect. Whoever thinks to remain neutral is before all things a sceptic. This neutrality is the essence of the sect; who is not against them is pre-eminently for them. They are not for themselves, they are neutral, indifferent, in suspense as to all things, themselves included.

What then shall man do in such a state? Shall he doubt of all, doubt whether he wake, whether you pinch him, or burn him, doubt whether he doubts, doubt whether he is? We cannot go so far as that, and I therefore state as a fact that there never has been a perfect finished sceptic; nature upholds the weakness of reason, and prevents its wandering to such a point.

Shall he say on the contrary that he is in sure possession of truth, when if we press him never so little, he can produce no title, and is obliged to quit his hold?

What a chimæra then is man! how strange and monstrous! a chaos, a contradiction, a prodigy. Judge of all things, yet a weak earth-worm; depositary of truth, yet a cesspool of uncertainty and error; the glory and offscouring of the Universe.

Who will unravel such a tangle? This is certainly beyond the power of dogmatism and scepticism, and all human philosophy. Man is incomprehensible by man. We grant to the sceptics what they have so loudly asserted, that truth is not within our reach nor to our taste, that her home is not on earth but in heaven, that she dwells within the breast of God, and that we can only know her so far as it pleases him to reveal her. Let us then learn our true nature from truth uncreate and incarnate.

Nature confounds the sceptics, and reason the dogmatists. What then will become of you, O men! who by your natural reason search out your true condition? You can neither avoid both these sects nor live in either.

Know then, proud man, how great a paradox thou art to thyself. Bow down thyself, weak reason; be silent, thou foolish nature; learn that man is altogether incomprehensible by man, and learn from your master your true condition which you ignore. Hear God.

For in a word, had man never been corrupt he would innocently and securely enjoy truth and happiness. And had man never been other than corrupt he would have no idea of virtue or blessedness. But wretched as we are, and even more than if there were no greatness in our condition, we have an idea of happiness and cannot attain it, we feel an image of truth and possess a lie only, alike incapable of absolute ignorance and of certain knowledge, so manifest is it that we once were in a degree of perfection from which we have unhappily fallen!

Yet it is an astonishing thing that the mystery most removed from our knowledge, that of the transmission of sin, should be a thing without which we can have no knowledge of ourselves. For it is certain that nothing more shocks our reason than to say that the sin of the first man rendered those culpable, who, being so distant from the source, seem incapable of participation in it. This transfusion does not only seem to us impossible, but even most unjust, for there is nothing so repugnant to the rules of our miserable justice as to damn eternally an infant incapable of will, for a sin in which he seems to have so scanty a share, that it was committed six thousand years before he was in being. Certainly nothing

shocks us more rudely than this doctrine, and yet without this mystery, the most incomprehensible of all, we are incomprehensible to ourselves. The tangle of our condition takes its plies and folds in this abyss, so that man is more inconceivable without the mystery than the mystery is inconceivable to man.

Whence it appears that God, willing to render the difficulty of our being unintelligible to us, has concealed the knot so high, or rather so low, that we cannot reach it; so that it is not by the arrogant exertion of our reason, but by the simple submission of reason, that we can truly know ourselves.

These foundations solidly established on the inviolable authority of Religion make us understand that there are two truths of faith equally constant — the one, that man in his state at creation or in that of grace is elevated above the whole of nature, made like unto God and sharer of his divinity — the other, that in the state of corruption and sin he has fallen from his former state and is made like unto the brutes. These two propositions are equally fixed and certain. The Scripture declares this plainly to us when it says in some places: *Deliciæ meæ esse cum filiis hominum. Effundam spiritum meum super omnen carnem. Dii estis, etc.;* and in other places, *Omnis caro fœnum. Homo assimilatus est jumentis insipientibus et similis factus est illis. Dixi in corde meo de filiis hominum*.... Eccles. iii.

By which it clearly appears that man by grace is made like unto God, and a sharer in his divinity, and that without grace he is like the brute beasts, etc.

Scepticism. — I shall here write my thoughts without order, yet not perhaps in undesigned confusion, that is true order, which will always denote my object by its very disorder.

I should do too much honour to my subject if I treated it with order, because I wish to show that it is incapable of it.

Scepticism. — All things here are true in part, and false in part. Essential truth is not thus, it is altogether pure and true. This mixture dishonours and annihilates it. Nothing is purely true, and therefore nothing is true, understanding by that pure

truth. You will say it is true that homicide is an evil, yes, for we know well what is evil and false. But what can be named as good? Chastity? I say no, for then the world would come to an end. Marriage? No, a celibate life is better. Not to kill? No, for lawlessness would be horrible, and the wicked would kill all the good. To kill then? No, for that destroys nature. Goodness and truth are therefore only partial, and mixed with what is evil and false.

Were we to dream the same thing every night, this would affect us as much as the objects we see every day, and were an artisan sure to dream every night, for twelve hours at a stretch, that he was a king, I think he would be almost as happy as a king who should dream every night for twelve hours at a stretch that he was an artisan.

Should we dream every night that we were pursued by enemies, and harassed by these painful phantoms, or that we were passing all our days in various occupations, as in travelling, we should suffer almost as much as if the dream were real, and should fear to sleep, as now we fear to wake when we expect in truth to enter on such misfortunes. And, in fact, it would bring about nearly the same troubles as the reality.

But since dreams are all different, and each single dream is diversified, what we see in them affects us much less than what we see when awake, because that is continuous, not indeed so continuous and level as never to change, but the change is less abrupt, except occasionally, as when we travel, and then we say, “I think I am dreaming,” for life is but a little less inconstant dream.

Instinct, reason. — We have an incapacity of proof which no dogmatism can overcome. We have an idea of truth, which no scepticism can overcome.

Nothing more strengthens scepticism than that some are not sceptics; were all so, they would be in the wrong.

This sect draw their strength from their enemies more than from their friends, for the weakness of man appears much more in those who are not, than in those who are conscious of it.

Against scepticism. — We suppose that we all conceive of things in the same way, but it is a gratuitous supposition, of which we have no proof. I see indeed that the same words are applied on the same occasions, and that every time two men see a body change its place, they both express their view of the same object by the same word, both saying that it has moved, and from this sameness of application we have a strong conviction of a sameness of idea; but this, though it may be enough to justify us in wagering the affirmative, is not finally or completely convincing, since we know that we often draw the same conclusions from different premisses.

This is enough, at any rate, to confuse the matter, not that it wholly extinguishes the natural light which assures us of these things; the academicians would have won, but this obscures it, and troubles the dogmatists to the glory of the sceptical cabal, which consists in this ambiguous ambiguity, and in a certain doubtful haze, from which our doubts cannot take away all the light, nor our natural light banish all the darkness.

Good sense. — They are obliged to say, "You do not act in good faith; we are not asleep," etc. How I like to see this proud reason humiliated and suppliant. For this is not the language of a man whose right is disputed, and who defends it with the mailed power of his hand. He does not trifle by saying that men are not acting in good faith, but he punishes this bad faith with might.

It may be that there are true demonstrations, but it is not certain. Thus this proves nothing but that it is not certain that all is uncertain, to the glory of scepticism.

Ex senatus consultis et plebiscitis scelera exercentur.

Nihil tam absurde dici potest quod non dicatur ab aliquo philosophorum. Quibusdam destinatis sententiis consecrati quæ non probant coguntur defendere.

Ut omnium rerum sic litterarum quoque intemperantiâ laboramus.

Id maxime quemque decet quod est cujusque suum maxime.

Hos natura modos primum dedit.

Paucis opus est litteris ad bonam mentem.

Si quando turpe non sit, tamen non est non turpe quum id a multitudine laudetur.

Mihi sic usus est, tibi ut opus est facto, fac.

The falsity of those philosophers who do not discuss the immortality of the soul. The falsity of their dilemma in Montaigne.

It is beyond doubt that the mortality or immortality of the soul must make an entire difference in morals; yet philosophers have treated morality independently of the question. They discuss to pass the time.

Plato, to dispose towards Christianity.

The soul is immaterial. Philosophers have subdued their passions. What matter could do that?

Atheists should say things which are perfectly clear, but it is not perfectly clear that the soul is material.

Atheism is a mark of strength of mind, but only to a certain degree.

Against those philosophers who believe in God without Jesus Christ. — They believe that God alone is worthy to be loved and admired, and they have desired

to be loved and admired of men, and know not their own corruption. If they feel themselves full of feelings of love and adoration, and if they find therein their chief joy, let them think themselves good, and welcome! But if they find themselves averse from him, if they have no inclination but the wish to establish themselves in the esteem of men, and if their whole perfection consists not in constraining, but yet in causing men to find their happiness in loving them, I say that such a perfection is horrible. What! they have known God, and have not desired solely that men should love him, but that men should stop short at loving them. They have wished to be the object of the voluntary joy of men.

All the principles of sceptics, stoics, atheists, etc. are true; but their conclusions are false, because the opposite principles are also true.

But perhaps the subject goes beyond the reach of reason. We will therefore examine what she has to say on questions within her powers. If there be anything to which her own interest must have made her apply herself most seriously, it is the search after her sovereign good. Let us see then in what these strong and clearsighted souls have placed it, and whether they agree.

One says that the sovereign good consists in virtue, another in pleasure, another in the knowledge of nature, another in truth: *Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas*, another in total ignorance, another in indolence, others in neglect of appearances, another in the lack of wonder, *nihil mirari prope res una quæ possit facere et servare beatum*, the true sceptics in their indifference, doubt and perpetual suspense, and others, more wise, think they can find a better way. And this is all we get from them!

We must needs see if this fine philosophy has gained nothing certain from a research so lengthy and so wide, at least perhaps the soul has learned to know herself. We will hear the rulers of the world on this matter. What have they thought of her substance?

Have they been more happy in fixing her seat?

What have they discovered about her origin, duration and departure?

Search for the true good. — Ordinary men place their good in fortune and external goods, or at least in amusement. Philosophers have shown the vanity of all this, and have placed it where best they could.

Philosophers reckon two hundred and eighty-eight sovereign goods.

The sovereign good. Dispute about the sovereign good. — Ut sis contentus temetipso et ex te nascentibus bonis. There is a contradiction, for finally they advise suicide. Ah! happy life indeed, from which we are to free ourselves as from the plague.

It is well to be weary and harassed by the useless search after the true good, that we may stretch our arms to the Redeemer.

Conversation. — Great words: Religion. I deny it.
Conversation. — Scepticism aids Religion.

Philosophers. — We are full of matters which take us out of ourselves.
Our instinct suggests that we must seek our happiness outside ourselves; our passions hurry us abroad, even when there are no objects to excite them. The objects outside us tempt and call us, even when we do not think of them. And thus it is in vain for philosophers to say, "Enter into yourselves, and you will find your good there;" we believe them not, and those who believe them are the most empty and the most foolish.

This civil war between reason and passion divides those who desire peace into two sects, the one, of those who would renounce their passions and become gods, the other, of those who would renounce their reason and become brute beasts. — Des Barreaux. — But neither has succeeded, and reason still exists, to condemn

the baseness and injustice of the passions, and to trouble the repose of those who give themselves over to their sway, and the passions are still vigorous in those who desire to renounce them.

The Stoics. — They conclude that what has been done once may be done always, and that because the desire of glory gives some degree of power to those possessed by it, others can easily do the same.

These are the movements of fever, which health cannot imitate.

Epictetus concludes that since there are consistent Christians all men can easily be so.

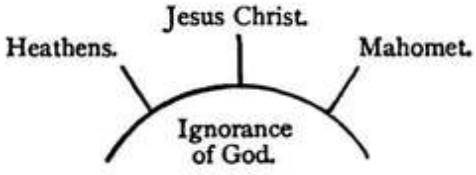
The three kinds of lust have made three sects, and philosophers have done no other thing than follow one of the three lusts.

What the Stoics propose is so difficult and so idle.

The Stoics lay down that all who are not at the highest degree of wisdom are equally frivolous and vicious, as those who are in two inches under water....

Philosophers. — A fine thing to cry to a man who does not know himself, that of himself he should come to God. And a fine thing also to say to a man who knows himself.

THOUGHTS ON MAHOMET AND ON CHINA.



The foundation of our faith. — The heathen religion has no foundation at the present day. We are told that it once had such a foundation by the voice of the oracles, but what are the books which certify this? Are they worthy of credence on account of the virtue of their writers, have they been kept with such care that we may feel certain none have tampered with them?

The Mahomedan religion has for its foundation the Koran and Mahomet. But was this prophet, who was to be the last hope of the world, foretold? What mark has he that every other man has not who chooses to call himself prophet? What miracles does he himself tell us that he wrought? What mystery has he taught? Even according to his own tradition, what was the morality, what the happiness he offered?

The Jewish religion must be differently regarded in the tradition of the sacred books and in the tradition of the people. Its morality and happiness are ridiculous in the tradition of the people, but admirable in that of their saints. The foundation is admirable, it is the most ancient book in the world, and the most authentic, and whereas Mahomet, in order to ensure the lasting existence of his book forbade men to read it, Moses with the same object commanded everyone to read his. And it is the same with all religions, for the Christianity of the sacred books is quite different to that of the casuists.

Our religion is so divine that another divine religion is only the foundation of it.

The difference between Jesus Christ and Mahomet. — Mahomet was not foretold; Jesus Christ was foretold.

Mahomet that he slew; Jesus Christ that he caused his own to be slain.

Mahomet forbade reading; the apostles ordered it.

In fact the two systems are so contrary that if Mahomet took the way, humanly speaking, to succeed, Jesus Christ took, humanly speaking, the way to perish. And instead of concluding from Mahomet's success that Jesus Christ might well have succeeded, we should rather say that since Mahomet succeeded, Jesus Christ ought to have perished.

The Psalms are chanted throughout all the world.

Who renders testimony to Mahomet? Himself. Jesus Christ wills that his testimony to himself should be of no avail.

The quality of witnesses demands that they should exist always and everywhere, and the wretch stands alone.

The falsity of other religions. — Mahomet had no authority. His reasons ought to be most cogent, having nothing but their own force.

What does he say then in order to make us believe him?

Any man can do what Mahomet did, for he wrought no miracles, he was confirmed by no prophecies. No man can do what Jesus Christ did.

Against Mahomet. — The Koran is not more of Mahomet than the Gospel is of Saint Matthew, for it is cited by many authors from age to age. Even its very enemies, Celsus and Porphyry, never disavowed it.

The Koran says that Saint Matthew was an honest man. Therefore Mahomet was a false prophet for calling honest men wicked, or for not admitting what they have said of Jesus Christ.

It is not by the obscurities in Mahomet which may be interpreted in a mysterious sense, that I would have him judged, but in what he speaks clearly, as of his paradise, and the rest, he is ridiculous. And because what is clear is so absurd, it is not just to take his obscurities for mysteries.

It is not the same with the Scripture. It may be admitted that in it are obscurities as strange as those of Mahomet, but much is admirably clear, and prophecies are manifestly fulfilled. The cases are not the same. We must not confound and compare things which only resemble each other in their obscurity, and not in that clearness, which should induce us to reverence the obscurities.

Suppose two persons tell foolish stories, one whose words have a two-fold sense, understood only by his own followers, the other which has only the one sense, a stranger not being in the secret, who hears them both speak in this manner, would pass on them a like judgment. But if afterwards in the rest of their conversation one speak with the tongue of angels, and the other mere wearisome common-places, he will judge that the one spoke in mysteries and not the other; the one having sufficiently shown that he was incapable of absurdity, and capable of being mysterious, the other that he is incapable of mystery, and capable of absurdity.

The Old Testament is a cipher.

History of China. — I believe those histories only, whose witnesses let themselves be slaughtered.

It is not a question of seeing this in bulk. I say there is in it a something to blind and something to enlighten.

In this one word I destroy all your reasoning. “But China obscures,” you say, and I answer, “China obscures, but there is light to be found; seek it.”

Thus all that you say makes for one of these designs, and not at all against the other. So this serves, and does no harm.

We must then look at this in detail, the papers must be laid on the table.

Against the history of China, the historians of Mexico. The five suns, of which the last is but eight hundred years old.

OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE.



I SEE THE Christian Religion founded on an earlier Religion, and this is what I find of positive fact.

I do not here speak of the miracles of Moses, of Jesus Christ, and of the Apostles, because they do not at first seem convincing, and because I only wish here to adduce in evidence all those foundations of the Christian Religion which are beyond a doubt, and on which doubt cannot be cast by any person soever. It is certain that we see in many places in the world a peculiar people, separated from all other peoples of the world, which is called the Jewish people.

I see then a mass of religions in many countries, and in all times, but they neither please me by their morality, nor convince me by their proofs. Thus I should equally have refused the religion of Mahomet and of China, of the ancient Romans and of the Egyptians, for the sole reason, that none having more marks of truth than another, nor any thing which necessarily decides me, reason cannot incline to one rather than the other.

But while I consider this vacillating and strange variety of morals and beliefs at different times, I find in one corner of the world a peculiar people, separated from all other nations upon earth, the oldest of all, and whose histories are earlier by many ages than the most ancient in our possession.

I find then this great and numerous people, sprung from a single man, who adore one God, and guide themselves by a law, given them as they say, by his own hand. They maintain that to them alone in the world God has revealed his mysteries, that all men are corrupt and under the wrath of God, are all abandoned to their senses and imagination, whence arise the strange errors and continual changes among them, both of religions and of manners, whereas this nation remains unshaken in its conduct: but that God will not leave other nations in

darkness for ever, that there will come a Saviour for all, that they are in the world to announce his coming, that they were expressly formed to be the forerunners and heralds of this great advent, and to call on all nations to join with them in the expectation of this Redeemer.

Advantages of the Jewish people. — In this search the Jewish people at first attracts my attention by a number of wonderful and singular things which appear among them.

I see first that they are a people wholly composed of brethren, and whereas all others are formed by the assemblage of an infinity of families, this, though so prodigiously fruitful, has sprung from one man only, and being thus all one flesh, and members one of another, they form a powerful state consisting of one family, a fact without example.

This family or nation is the most ancient known to men, a fact which seems to invest it with a peculiar veneration, especially in regard to our present enquiry, because if God has during all time revealed himself to men, these are they from whom we must learn the tradition.

This people is not peculiar only by their antiquity, but also remarkable by their duration, which has been unbroken from their origin till now. For while the nations of Greece and Italy, of Lacedæmon, Athens and Rome, and others who came after, have long been extinct, these still remain, and in spite of the endeavours of many powerful princes who have a hundred times striven to destroy them, as their historians testify, and as we can easily understand by the natural order of things during so long a space of years, they have nevertheless been preserved, and extending from the earliest times to the latest, their history comprehends in its duration all our histories.

The Law by which this people is governed is at once the most ancient law in the world, the most perfect, and the only one which has been kept without interruption in a state. This is what Josephus excellently shows, against Apion, as does Philo the Jew in many places, where they point out that it is so ancient that

the very name of *law* was only known by the men of old more than a thousand years afterwards, so that Homer, who has treated the history of so many States, has not once used the word. And it is easy to judge of the perfection of the Law by simply reading it, for it plainly provides for all things with so great wisdom, equity and judgment, that the most ancient legislators, Greek and Roman, having had some glimpse of it, have borrowed from it their principal laws, as appears by those called Of the Twelve Tables, and by the other proofs given by Josephus.

Yet this law is at the same time severe and rigorous beyond all others in respect to their religious worship, constraining the people, in order to keep them in their duty, to a thousand peculiar and painful observances, on pain of death. Whence it is a most astonishing fact, that it has been constantly preserved during many ages by a people so rebellious and impatient, while all other states have changed their laws from time to time, although they are far more lenient.

The book containing this law, the first of all laws, is itself the most ancient book in the world, those of Homer, Hesiod and others dating from six or seven hundred years later.

Falsity of other religions. — They have no witnesses; this people has them. God challenges other religions to produce such marks. Is. xliii. 9, — xliv. 8.

This is fact. While all philosophers separate into different sects, there is found in one corner of the world, a people, the most ancient in the world, declaring that all the world is in error, that God has revealed to them the truth, that they will abide always on the earth. In fact, all other sects come to an end, this one still endures, and has done so for four thousand years. They assert that they hold from their ancestors that man has fallen from communion with God, is entirely separated from God, but that he has promised to redeem them, that their doctrine shall always exist on the earth;

That their law has a twofold sense, that during sixteen hundred years they have had people whom they believed prophets foretelling both the time and the

manner;

That four hundred years after they were scattered everywhere in order that Jesus Christ should be everywhere announced, Jesus Christ came in the manner and time foretold;

That the Jews have since been scattered abroad under a curse, yet nevertheless still exist.

The creation and the deluge being past, and God not intending any more to destroy the world, nor to create it anew, nor to give any such great proofs of himself, he began to establish a people on the earth, formed of set purpose, which should last until the coming of that people whom Messiah should mould by his spirit.

The Jews who were called to subdue the nations and their kings were slaves of sin, and the Christians whose calling has been to be servants and subjects, are free children.

The devil troubled the zeal of the Jews before Jesus Christ, because he would have been their salvation, but not since.

The Jewish people mocked of the Gentiles, the Christian people persecuted.

Republic. — The Christian and even the Jewish Republic has only had God for master, as Philo the Jew notices, *On Monarchy*.

When they fought, they did so for God alone, their chief hope was in God alone, they considered their towns as belonging to God, and they kept them for God. I Chron. xix. 13.

The sceptre was not interrupted by the carrying away into Babylon, because the return was promised and foretold.

A single phrase of David or of Moses, as for instance that God will circumcise the heart, enables us to judge of their spirit. If all the rest of their language were ambiguous, and left it doubtful whether they were philosophers or Christians, one single sentence of this kind would determine all the rest, as one sentence of Epictetus determines the character of the rest to be the contrary. So far we may be in doubt, but not afterwards.

While the prophets were for maintaining the law, the people were negligent, but since there have been no more prophets, zeal has taken their place.

The zeal of the Jewish people for the law, especially since there have been no more prophets.

Maccabees after they had no more prophets. The Masorah after Jesus Christ.

THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE SACRED BOOKS.



The Premiss. — Moses was a man of genius. If then he ruled himself by his reason, he should say nothing clearly which was directly against reason.

So all the apparent weaknesses are strength. Example: the two genealogies in Saint Matthew and Saint Luke. What can be more clear than that this was not concerted?

Proof of Moses. — Why should Moses make the lives of men so long, and their generations so few?

Because it is not the length of years, but the number of generations which renders matters obscure.

For truth is impaired only by the change of men. And yet Moses places two things, the most memorable that can be imagined, that is to say the creation and the deluge, so near that we can reach from one to the other.

Another proof. — The longevity of the patriarchs, instead of causing the loss of past history, was the rather serviceable for its preservation. For if we are not always well instructed in the history of our ancestors, it is because we have never lived much with them, and because they are often dead before we have ourselves attained the age of reason. But when men lived so long, children lived long with their parents, and long conversed with them. Now, their conversation could only be of the history of their ancestors, since to that all history was reduced, and men did not study science or art, which now take up so much of our daily discourse. We see also that at that time men took special care to preserve their genealogies.

Shem, who saw Lamech, who saw Adam, saw also Jacob, who saw those who saw Moses; therefore the deluge and the creation are true. This is conclusive among certain people who clearly understand it.

Josephus conceals the shame of his nation.

Moses does not conceal his own shame nor....

Quis mihi det ut omnes prophetent?

He was tired of the people.

When the creation of the people began to stand at a distance, God provided a single contemporary historian, and appointed a whole people as the guardians of this book, in order that the history might be the most authentic in all the world, that all men might learn a thing so necessary to know, yet so impossible to be known in any other way.

If the story in Esdras is credible, then it must be believed that Scripture is Holy Scripture. For this story is founded only on the authority of those who allege that of the Seventy, which shows that the Scripture is holy.

Therefore if the tale be true, we find our proof therein, if not we have it elsewhere. Thus those who would ruin the truth of our Religion, founded on Moses, establish it by the same authority by which they attack it. Thus by this providence it still exists.

On Esdras. — The story that the books were burnt with the temple shown to be false by The Book of Maccabees. *Jeremiah gave them the law.*

The story that he recited the whole by heart. Josephus and Esdras note *that he read the book*. Baronius, Ann. 180. *Nullus penitus Hebræorum antiquorum reperitur qui tradiderit libros periisse et per Esdram esse restitutos, nisi in IV. Esdræ.*

The story that he changed the letters.

Philo, *in Vita Moysis*: *Illa lingua ac charactere quo antiquitus scripta est lex, sic permansit usque ad LXX.*

Josephus says the Law was in Hebrew when it was translated by the Seventy.

Under Antiochus and Vespasian, when they wished to abolish the books, and when there was no prophet, they could not do so. And under the Babylonians when there had been no persecution, and when there were so many prophets, would they have allowed them to be burnt?

Josephus derides the Greeks who would not allow....

Tertullian. — *Perinde potuit abolefactam eam violentia cataclysmi in spiritu rursus reformare, quemadmodum et Hierosolymis Babylonia expugnatione deletis, omne instrumentum Judaicæ literaturæ per Esdram constat restauratum.* Lib. I. *De Cultu femin.* cap. iii.

He says that Noah might as easily have restored by the spirit the book of Enoch, destroyed by the deluge, as Esdras have restored the Scriptures lost during the Captivity.

Θεὸς ἐν τῇ ἐπὶ Ναβουχοδονόσορ αἰχμαλωσίᾳ τοῦ λαοῦ διαφθαρεισῶν τῶν γραφῶν, ἐνέπνευσε Ἔσδρᾷ τῷ ἱερεῖ ἐκ τῆς φυλῆς Λεοὶ τοῦς τῶν προγεγονότων προφητῶν πάντας ἀναταξάσθαι λόγους, καὶ ἀποκαταστῆσαι τῷ λαῷ τὴν διὰ Μωσέως νομοθησίαν. He alleges this to prove that it is not incredible that the Seventy should have explained the holy Scriptures with that uniformity which we admire in them. Euseb. lib. v. Hist. ca. And he took that from Saint Irenæus.

Saint Hilary in his preface to the Psalms says that Esdras arranged the Psalms in order.

The origin of this tradition comes from the Book of Esdras.

Deus glorificatus est, et Scripturæ veræ divinæ creditæ sunt, omnibus eandem et eisdem verbis et eisdem nominibus recitantibus ab initio usque ad finem, uti et præsentes gentes cognoscerent quoniam per inspirationem Dei interpretatæ sunt Scripturæ, et non esset mirabile Deum hoc in eis operatum, quando in ea

captivitate populi quæ facta est a Nabuchodonosor corruptis Scripturis et post septuaginta annos Judæis descendentibus in regionem suam, et post deinde temporibus Artaxexis Persarum regis inspiravit Hesdræ sacerdoti tribus Levi præteritorum prophetarum omnes rememorare sermones et restituere populo eam legem quæ data est per Moysen.

Against the Story in Esdras, II. Maccab. 2. Josephus, *Antiquities*, II. 1. — Cyrus took occasion from the prophecy of Isaiah to release the people. The Jews held property in peace under Cyrus in Babylon, therefore they might well have the Law.

Josephus, in the whole history of Esdras, says not a single word of this restoration. — II. Kings, xvii. 37.

Scripture has provided passages of consolation and warning for every condition of life.

Nature seems to have done the same thing by her two infinities, natural and moral, for we shall always have those who are higher and lower, who are more and less able, who are noble and in low estate, in order to abate our pride, and raise our lowliness.

Order, against the objection that the Scripture has no order. — The heart has its own order; the mind too has its own, which is by premisses and demonstrations, that of the heart is wholly different. It were absurd to prove that we are worthy of love by putting forth in order the causes of love.

Jesus Christ and Saint Paul use the order of charity, not of the intellect, for they wish to warm, not to teach; the same with Saint Augustine. This order consists mainly in digressions on each point which may illustrate the main end, and keep it ever in view.

God and the Apostles foreseeing that the seed of pride would cause heresies to spring up, and not wishing to give them occasion to arise by defining them, have placed in the Scripture and the prayers of the Church contrary words and sentences to produce their fruit in time.

So in morals he gives charity to produce fruits contrary to lust.

He who knows the will of his master will be beaten with more stripes, because of the power he has by his knowledge. *Qui justus est justificetur adhuc*, because of the power which he has by justice. From him who has received most will the greatest account be demanded, because the aid received has given him greater power.

There is an universal and essential difference between the actions of the will and all other actions.

The will is one of the chief organs of belief, not that it forms belief, but that things are true or false according to the side on which we view them. The will which chooses one side rather than the other turns away the mind from considering the qualities of all that it does not like to see, thus the mind, moving in accord with the will, stays to look at the side it chooses, and so judges by what it sees.

All things work together for good to the elect, even the obscurities of Scripture, which they honour because of what is divinely clear. And all things work together for evil to the reprobate, even what is clear, which they blaspheme because of the obscurities they do not understand.

How many stars have telescopes discovered for us which did not exist for the philosophers of old. Men have roundly taken holy Scripture to task in regard to the great multitude of stars, saying: “We know that there are only a thousand and twenty-two.”

The meaning changes according to the words which express it. The meaning receives its dignity from words instead of giving it. We must seek examples of this.

Words differently arranged have different meanings, and meanings differently arranged produce different effects.

THE PROPHECIES.



THE PROPHECIES ARE the strongest proofs of Jesus Christ. For these therefore God has made the most provision; since the event which has fulfilled them is a miracle existing from the birth of the Church to the end. Therefore God raised up prophets during sixteen hundred years, and during four hundred years afterwards he dispersed all these prophecies with all the Jews, who bore them into all regions of the world. Such was the preparation for the birth of Jesus Christ, whose Gospel exacting belief from every man made it necessary not only that there should be prophecies to inspire this belief, but that these prophecies should be spread throughout the whole world, so that the whole world should embrace it.

Prophecies. — If one man alone had made a book of predictions concerning Jesus Christ, both as to the time and the manner of his coming, and if Jesus Christ had come in agreement with these prophecies, the fact would have had infinite force.

But in this case there is much more. Here is a succession of men for the space of four thousand years, who without interruption or variation, follow one another in foretelling the same event. Here is a whole people announcing it, existing for four thousand years, to testify in a body their certainty, from which they cannot be diverted by all the threatenings and persecutions brought to bear against them; this is in a far greater degree important.

But it was not enough that the prophecies existed, they needed also distribution through all places, and preservation through all time. And in order that this agreement might not be taken as an effect of chance, it was necessary it should be foretold.

It is much more glorious for the Messiah that they should be spectators and even instruments of his glory, beyond the fact that God had preserved him.

Proof. — Prophecy with accomplishment.
That which preceded, and that which followed Jesus Christ.

The prophecies concerning the Messiah are mingled with some concerning other matters, so that neither the prophecies of the Messiah should be without proof, nor the special prophecies without fruit.

Non habemus regem nisi Cæsarem. Therefore Jesus Christ was the Messiah, because they had no longer any king but a stranger, and because they would have no other.

The eternal kingdom of the race of David, II. Chron., by all the prophecies, and with an oath. And it was not temporally accomplished. Jer. xxxiii. 20.

Zeph. iii. 9.— "I will give my words to the Gentiles, that all may serve me with one consent."
Ezekiel xxxvii 25.— "My servant David shall be their prince for ever."
Exodus iv. 22.— "Israel is my first born."

We might easily think that when the prophets foretold that the sceptre would not depart from Judah until the advent of the eternal king, they spoke to flatter the people, and that their prophecy was proved false by Herod. But to show that this was not their meaning, and that on the contrary they well knew that the temporal kingdom should cease, they said they would be without a king, and without a prince, and for a long time. Hosea iii. 4.

Prophecies. — That Jesus Christ will sit on the right hand till God has put his enemies under his feet.

Therefore he will not subject them himself.

The time of the first advent was foretold, the time of the second is not so, because the first was to be secret, the second must be glorious, and so manifest that even his enemies will recognise it. But as his first coming was to be obscure, and to be known only of those who searched the Scriptures....

The prophecies must be unintelligible to the wicked, Daniel xii. 10, Hosea xiv. 9, but intelligible to those who are well instructed.

The prophecies which represent him poor, represent him master of the nations. — Is. lii. 16, etc liii. Zech. ix. 9.

The prophecies which foretell the time foretell him only as master of the Gentiles and suffering, and not as in the clouds nor as judge. And those which represent him thus as judge and in glory do not specify the time.

Do you think that the prophecies cited in the Gospel were reported to make you believe? No, but to prevent your believing.

Prophecies. — The time was foretold by the state of the Jewish people, by the state of the heathen world, by the state of the temple, by the number of years.

It is daring to predict the same affair in so many ways. It was necessary that the four idolatrous or pagan monarchies, the end of the kingdom of Judah, and the seventy weeks should coincide, and all this before the second temple was destroyed.

Prophecies. — The seventy weeks of Daniel are equivocal in the term of commencement, because of the terms of the prophecy, and in the term of

conclusion because of the differences in the chronologists. But all this difference extends only to two hundred years.

We understand the prophecies only when we see the events occur, thus the proofs of retreat, discretion, silence, etc., are evidence only to those who know and believe them.

Joseph so interior in a law so exterior.

Exterior penances dispose to interior, as humiliations to humility. So the....

The more I examine them the more I find truths in them, both in those which preceded and those which followed, both the synagogue which was foretold, and the wretches who adhere to it, and who, being our enemies, are admirable witnesses of the truth of these prophecies, wherein their misery and even their blindness is foretold.

I find this sequence, our Religion wholly divine in its authority, in its duration, in its perpetuity, in its morality, in its conduct, its doctrine, and its effects.

The frightful darkness of the Jews foretold. *Eris palpans in meridie. Dabitur liber scienti literas, et dicet: Non possum legere.*

Hosea i. 9. "Ye shall not be my people and I will not be your God," when you are multiplied after the dispersion. "In the places where it was said: Ye are not my people, I will call them my people."

Predictions. — That under the fourth monarchy, before the destruction of the second temple, before the dominion of the Jews was taken away, and in the seventieth week of Daniel, while the second temple was still standing, the Gentiles should be instructed, and brought to the knowledge of the God worshipped by the Jews, that those who loved him should be delivered from their enemies, and filled with his fear and love.

And it came to pass that under the fourth monarchy, before the destruction of the second temple, etc, the Gentiles in crowds worshipped God and lived an angelic life. Maidens dedicated their virginity and their life to God, men gave up their pleasures, what Plato was only able to effect upon a few men, chosen and instructed to that end, a secret force, by the power of a few words, now wrought upon a hundred million ignorant men.

The rich left their wealth, children left the luxurious homes of their parents to go into the austerity of the desert, etc., according to Philo the Jew. All this was foretold long ages ago. For two thousand years no Gentile had worshipped the God of the Jews, and at the time foretold, the crowd of Gentiles worshipped this only God. The temples were destroyed, the very kings bowed themselves under the cross. All this was of the Spirit of God spread abroad upon the earth.

Holiness. — Effundam spiritum meum. — All nations had been in unbelief and lust; the whole world was now ablaze with love. Princes quitted their state, maidens suffered martyrdom. This power sprang from the advent of Messiah, this was the effect and these the tokens of his coming.

Predictions. — It was foretold that in the time of Messiah he would come and establish a new covenant, such as should make them forget the coming out from Egypt, Jer. xxiii. 5, Is. xliii. 16, that he would put his Law not in externals, but in the heart, that Jesus Christ would put his fear, which had been only from without, in the midst of the heart. Who does not see the Christian law in all this?

Prophecies. — That the Jews would reject Jesus Christ, and would themselves be rejected of God because the choice vine brought forth only wild grapes; that the chosen people should be disloyal, ungrateful, incredulous, *populum non credentem et contradicentem*; that God would strike them with blindness, and that in full mid-day they would grope like blind men; that his messenger should go before him.

"... Then shall a man no more teach his neighbour, saying, There is the Lord, *for God will make himself felt by all, your sons shall prophesy*. *I will put my spirit and my fear in your heart.*"

All that is the same thing. To prophesy is to speak of God, not by outward proofs, but by a feeling interior and direct.

Prophecies. — Transfixerunt, Zech. xii. 10.

That there should come a deliverer to crush the demon's head, and to free his people from their sins, *ex omnibus iniquitatibus*. That there should be a new and eternal covenant, and a new and eternal priesthood after the order of Melchisedek, that the Christ should be glorious, powerful, mighty, and yet so miserable that he would not be recognised, nor taken for what he is, but be rejected and slain, that his people which denied him should be no more his people, that the idolaters would receive him and trust in him, that he would quit Zion to reign in the centre of idolatry, that the Jews should exist for ever, that he would spring from Judah, and at a time when there should be no longer a king.

That Jesus Christ would be small in his beginnings, and afterwards would increase. The little stone of Daniel.

That he would teach men the perfect way,

And never has there come before him nor after him any man who has taught anything divine approaching this.

That then idolatry would be overthrown, that the Messiah would cast down all idols, and would bring men into the worship of the true God.

That the idol temples would be overthrown, and that among all nations and in all places of the world men would offer to God a pure sacrifice, not of beasts.

That he would be king of the Jews and Gentiles. And we see this king of Jews and Gentiles oppressed by both, both equally conspiring his death, we see him bear rule over both, destroying the worship established by Moses in Jerusalem its centre, where he placed his earliest Church, as well as the worship of idols in Rome its centre, where he placed his chief Church.

No Gentile from Moses to Jesus Christ according to the Rabbis themselves. The crowd of the Gentiles after Jesus Christ believed in the books of Moses and observed their essence and spirit, casting away only what was useless.

Omnis Judæa regio, et Jerosolomitæ universi et baptisabantur. — Because of all the conditions of men who came there.

These stones *can* become the children of Abraham.

Is. i. 21. Change of good into evil and the vengeance of God.

Is. x. 1. *Væ qui condunt leges iniquas.*

Is. xxvi. 20. *Vade populus meus, intra in cubicula tua, claude ostia tua super te, abscondere modicum ad momentum, donec pertranseat indignatio.*

Is. xxviii. 1. *Væ coronæ superbiæ.*

Miracles.. — Is. xxxiii. 9. *Luxit, et elanguit terra: confusus est Libanus, et obsorduit, etc.*

Nunc consurgam, dicit Dominus: nunc exaltabor, nunc sublevabor.

Is. xl. 17. *Omnes gentes quasi non sint.*

Is. xli. 26. *Quis annunciavit ab exordio ut sciamus: et a principio ut dicamus: Justus es?*

Is. xliii. 13. *Operabor, et quis avertet illud?*

Jer. xi. 21. *Non prophetabis in nomine Domini, et non morieris in manibus nostris.*

Propterea hæc dicit Dominus.

Jer. xv. 2. *Quod si dixerint ad te: Quo egrediemur? dices ad eos: Hæc dicit Dominus: Qui ad mortem, ad mortem: et qui ad gladium, ad gladium: et qui ad famem, ad famem: et qui ad captivitatem, ad captivitatem.*

Jer. xvii. 9. *Pravum est cor omnium, et inscrutabile: quis cognoscet illud?* that is to say, who can know all its evil, for it is already known to be wicked. *Ego Dominus scrutans cor, et probans renes.*

Et dixerunt: Venite et cogitemus contra Jeremiam cogitationes, non enim peribit lex a sacerdote, neque sermo a propheta.

Jer. xvii. 17. *Non sis tu mihi formidini, spes mea tu in die afflictionis.*

Trust in exterior sacrifices.

Jer. vii. 14. *Faciam domui huic, in qua invocatum est nomen meum, et in qua vos habetis fiduciam: et loco, quem dedi vobis et patribus vestris, sicut feci Silo.*

Exterior sacrifice is not the essential point.

Tu ergo noli orare pro populo hoc.

Jer. vii. 22. *Quia non sum locutus cum patribus vestris, et non præcepi eis in die, qua eduxi eos de Terra Ægypti, de verbo holocautomatum, et victimarum.*

Sed hoc verbum præcepi eis, dicens: Audite vocem meam, et ero vobis Deus, et vos eritis mihi populus: et ambulate in omni via, quam mandavi vobis, ut bene sit vobis. Et non audierunt.

Exterior sacrifice is not the essential point.

Jer. xi. 13. *Secundum numerum enim civitatum tuarum erant dii tui Juda: et secundum numerum viarum Jerusalem posuisti aras confusionis. Tu ergo noli orare pro populo hoc.*

A multitude of doctrines.

Is. xliv. 20. *Neque dicet: Forte mendacium est in dextera mea.*

Is. xliv. 21, etc. *Memento horum Jacob, et Israel, quoniam servus meus es tu. Formavi te, servus meus es tu Israel, ne obliviscaris mei.*

Delevi ut nubem iniquitates tuas, et quasi nebulam peccata tua: revertere ad me, quoniam redemi te.

xliv. 23, 24. *Laudate cæli, quoniam misericordiam fecit Dominus:..., quoniam redemit Dominus Jacob, et Israel gloriabitur. Hæc dicit Dominus redemptor tuus, et formator tuus ex utero: Ego sum Dominus, faciens omnia, extendens cælos solus, stabiliens terram, et nullus mecum.*

Is. liv. 8. *In momento indignationis abscondi faciem meam parumper a te, et in misericordia sempiterna misertus sum tui: dixit redemptor tuus Dominus.*

Is. lxiii. 12. *Qui eduxit ad dexteram Moysen brachio majestatis suæ, qui scidit aquas ante eos, ut faceret sibi nomen sempiternum.*

14. *Sic adduxisti populum tuum ut faceres tibi nomen gloriæ.*

Is. lxiii. 16. *Tu enim pater noster, et Abraham nescivit nos, et Israel ignoravit nos.*

Is. lxiii. 17. *Quare ... indurasti cor nostrum ne timeremus te?*

Is. lxvi. 17. *Qui sanctificabantur, et mundos se putabant ... simul consumentur, dicit Dominus.*

Jer. ii. 35. *Et dixisti: Absque peccato et innocens ego sum: et propterea avertatur furor tuus a me.*

Ecce ego judicio contendam tecum, eo quod dixeris: Non peccavi.

Jer. iv. 22. *Sapientes sunt ut faciant mala, bene autem facere nescierunt.*

Jer. iv. 23, 24. *Aspexi terram, et ecce vacua erat, et nihili: et cælos, et non erat lux in eis.*

Vidi montes, et ecce movebantur: et omnes colles conturbati sunt.

Intuitus sum, et non erat homo: et omne volatile cæli recessit. Aspexi, et ecce Carmelus desertus: et omnes urbes ejus destructæ sunt a facie Domini, et a facie iræ furoris ejus.

Hæc enim dicit Dominus: Deserta erit omnis terra, sed tamen consummationem non faciam.

Jer. v. 4. *Ego autem dixi: Forsitan pauperes sunt et stulti, ignorantes viam Domini, judicium Dei sui.*

Ibo ad optimates, et loquar eis: ipsi enim cognoverunt viam Domini: et ecce magis hi simul confregerunt jugum, ruperunt vincula. Idcirco percussit eos leo de silva, pardus vigilans super civitates eorum.

Jer. v. 29. *Numquid super his non visitabo, dicit Dominus? aut super gentem hujuscemodi non ulciscetur anima mea?*

Jer. v. 30. *Stupor et mirabilia facta sunt in terra:*

Jer. v. 31. *Prophetæ prophetabant mendacium, et sacerdotes applaudebant manibus suis: et populus meus dilexit talia: quid igitur fiet in novissimo ejus?*

Jer. vi 16.*Hæc dicit Dominus: State super vias, et videte, et interrogate de semitis antiquis, quæ sit via bona, et ambulate in ea: et invenietis refrigerium animabus vestris. Et dixerunt: Non ambulabimus.*

Et constituti super vos speculatores. Audite vocem tubæ. Et dixerunt: Non audiemus.

Ideo audite Gentes, quanta ego faciam eis. Audi terra: Ecce ego adducam mala, etc.

Jer. xxiii. 15.*A prophetis enim Hierusalem egressa est pollutio super omnem terram.*

Jer. xxiii. 17. *Dicunt his, qui blasphemant me: Locutus est Dominus, Pax erit vobis, et omni qui ambulat in pravitate cordis sui, dixerunt: Non veniet super vos malum.*

The Jews witnesses for God. Is. xliii. 9, xliv. 8.

Prophecies accomplished. — Malachi i. 11. The sacrifice of the Jews rejected, and the sacrifice of the Gentiles, even out of Jerusalem, and in all places.

— Moses before his death foretold the calling of the Gentiles, Deut. xxxii. 21, and the reprobation of the Jews.

Moses foretold what would happen to each tribe.

Prophecy. — Amos and Zechariah. They sold the just one, and therefore were not recalled.

— Jesus Christ betrayed.

They shall no more remember Egypt. See Is. xliii. 16-19, Jerem. xxiii. 7.

The Jews shall be scattered abroad. Is. xxvii. 6. A new law. Jer. xxxi. 31.

Malachi. Grotius. — The second temple glorious. Jesus Christ will come to it. Haggai ii. 7-10.... The calling of the Gentiles. Joel ii. 28. Hos. ii. 24. Deut. xxxii. 21. Mal. i. 11.

Moses first taught the Trinity, original sin, the Messiah.

David was a great witness.

A king, good, merciful, a fair soul, a fine mind, powerful. He prophesied, and his wonders came to pass. This is infinite.

He had only to say that he was the Messiah, had he been vain enough, for the prophecies are clearer about him than about Jesus Christ. The same with Saint John.

Special predictions. — They were strangers in Egypt without any private possessions, in that country or in any other, when Jacob dying and blessing his twelve children declared to them that they should possess a great land, and foretold in particular to the family of Judah that the kings who would one day govern them should be of his race, and that all his brethren should be subject to him.

This same Jacob disposing of the future land as though he were its master, gave a portion to Joseph more than to the others. “I give thee,” said he, “a portion more than to thy brethren.” And blessing his two children, Ephraim and Manasseh, whom Joseph had presented to him, the elder, Manasseh, on his right, and the young Ephraim on his left, he put his arms cross-wise, and placing his right hand on the head of Ephraim, and the left on Manasseh, he blessed them thus. And when Joseph represented to him that he was preferring the younger he answered him with admirable decision, “I know it well, my son, I know it, but Ephraim shall increase in a way quite other than Manasseh.” This has been in fact so true in the result that, being alone almost as abundant as the two entire lines

which compose a whole kingdom, they have been usually called by the name of Ephraim alone.

This same Joseph when dying commanded his children to bear his bones with them into that land to which they did not come for two hundred years afterwards.

Moses, who wrote all these things so long before they happened, himself made for each family the partition of the land before they entered it, as though he had been master of it.

He gave them judges to divide it, he prescribed the entire political form of government which they should observe, the cities of refuge which they should build, and....

Daniel ii. "All thy sooth-sayers and wise men cannot show unto thee the secret which thou hast demanded.

"But there is a God in heaven, who can do so, and he has revealed in thy dream the things which shall be in the latter days." *This dream must have caused him great uneasiness.*

"And it is not by my own wisdom that I have knowledge of this secret, but by the revelation of this same God who has discovered it to me, to make it manifest in thy presence.

"Thy dream was of this kind. Thou sawest a great image, high and terrible, which stood before thee. His head was of gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass. His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.

"Thus thou sawest till a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet, that were of iron and clay and brake them to pieces.

"Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and the wind carried them away, but this stone which smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This is the dream, and now I will give thee the interpretation.

“Thou who art the greatest of kings, and to whom God has given a power so extended that thou art renowned among all people, art the golden head of the image which thou hast seen.

“But after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.

“But the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron, and even as iron breaketh in pieces, and subdueth all things, so this empire shall break in pieces and bruise.

“And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of clay and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; and it shall be partly strong and partly broken.

“But as iron cannot be firmly mixed with clay, so they who are represented by the iron and by the clay, cannot cleave one to another though united by marriage.

“Now in the days of these kings will God raise up a Kingdom, which shall never be destroyed, nor ever be delivered up to another people.

“It shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever, according as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it fell from the mountain, and brake in pieces the iron, the clay, the silver and the gold. This is what God has revealed to thee of the things which must come in the fulness of time. This dream is true and the interpretation thereof is faithful. Then Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face towards the earth, etc.”

Daniel viii. “Daniel having seen the combat of the ram and of the he-goat, who vanquished him and ruled over the earth, whereof the principal horn being broken four others came up towards the four winds of heaven, and out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great toward the South and toward the East, and toward the land of Israel, and it waxed great, even to the host of heaven, and it cast down some of the stars, and stamped upon them, and at last overthrew the prince, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away and the place of his sanctuary was cast down.

“This is what Daniel saw. He asked the explanation and a voice cried in this manner, ‘Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision.’ And Gabriel said,

“The ram which thou sawest is the king of the Medes and Persians, and the he-goat is the king of Greece, and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king of this monarchy.

“Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not with his strength.

“Now in the latter time of their kingdom when iniquities shall be grown up, there shall arise a king insolent and strong, but his power shall be not his own. To him all things shall succeed after his will, and he shall destroy the holy people, and through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand, and he shall destroy many. He shall also stand up against the Prince of Princes, but he shall perish miserably, and nevertheless by a violent hand.”

Daniel ix. 20.

“As I was praying God with all my heart, and confessing my sin and the sin of all my people, and prostrating myself before God, even Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, came to me and touched me about the time of the evening oblation, and he informed me and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to teach thee that thou mightest understand. At the beginning of thy prayer I came to show thee that which thou didst desire, for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter and consider the vision. Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to abolish iniquity and to bring in everlasting righteousness; to accomplish the vision and the prophecies, and to anoint the Most Holy.

“After which this people shall be no more thy people, nor this city the holy city. The times of wrath are passed and the years of grace shall come for ever.

“Know therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and three score and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.”

The Hebrews were accustomed to divide numbers, and to place the smaller first, so that seven and sixty-two make sixty-nine. Of this seventy there will then

rest the seventieth: that is to say the seven last years of which he will speak next, and after these sixty-two weeks which have followed the seven first, the Christ should be killed, and a people would come with its prince, who should destroy the city, and the sanctuary, and overwhelm all, and the end of that war will accomplish the desolation. Christ shall be killed after the sixty-nine weeks, that is to say, in the last week.

"Now one week, which is the seventieth, which remains, shall confirm the covenant with many, and in the midst of the week, that is to say the last three years and a half, he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."

Daniel xi. The angel said to Daniel:

"There shall stand up yet," — after Cyrus, under whom all this still is,— "three kings in Persia," — Cambyses, Smyrdis, Darius;— "and the fourth," — Xerxes, who shall then come,— "shall be far richer than they all, and far stronger, and shall stir up all his people against the Greeks, and a mighty king shall stand up," — Alexander,— "that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided in four parts toward the four winds of heaven," — see also vii. 6 vii. 8— "but not to his posterity, and his successors shall not equal his power, for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside these," — his four principal successors.

"And the king — Ptolemy son of Lagos, — of the south," — Egypt,— "shall be strong, — but one of his princes shall be strong above him," — Seleucus king of Syria,— "and his dominion shall be a great dominion," — Appian says that he was the most powerful of Alexander's successors.

"And in the end of years they shall join themselves together, and the king's daughter of the South," — Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy Philadelphus, son of the other Ptolemy— "shall come to the king of the North to make peace between

these princes" — to Antiochus Deus, king of Syria and of Asia, son of Seleucus Lagidas.

"But neither she nor her seed shall have a long authority, for she and they that sent her and they that brought her, and her children and her friends, shall be delivered to death," — Berenice and her son were killed by Seleucus Callinicus.

"But out of a branch of her roots" — Ptolemy Euergetes was the son of the same father as Berenice— "shall one stand up in his estate, who shall come with an army into the land of the king of the north, and shall put all under subjection, and carry captives into Egypt their gods, their princes, their gold, their silver, and all their precious spoils, and shall continue many years when the king of the North can do nought against him." — If he had not been called into Egypt by domestic reasons, says Justin, he would have entirely ruined Seleucus.

"And thus he shall return into his kingdom, but his sons shall be stirred up and shall prepare an exceeding great multitude" — Seleucus Ceraunus, Antiochus the Great.

"And their army shall come and overthrow all, whereat the king of the South being moved with choler, shall come forth and fight with him and conquer," — Ptolemy Philopator against Antiochus the Great at Raphia— "and his troops shall become insolent, and his heart shall be lifted up," — this Ptolemy desecrated the temple — Josephus— "and he shall cast down many ten thousands, but he shall not be strengthened by it.

"For the king of the North" — Antiochus the Great— "shall return with a greater multitude than before," — in the reign of the young Ptolemy Epiphanes— "and then a great number of enemies shall stand up against the king of the south, also the apostates and robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall perish" — those who abandon their religion to please Euergetes, when he will send his troops to Scopas. For Antiochus will again take Scopas and conquer them.

“And the king of the North shall destroy the fenced cities and the armies of the south shall not withstand, and all shall yield to his will. He shall stand in the land of Israel and it shall yield to him.

“And thus he will think to render himself master of all the empire of Egypt,” — despising the youth of Epiphanes, says Justin.

“And for that he will make alliance with him and give his daughter,” — Cleopatra, in order that she may betray her husband. On which Appian says that doubtful of being able to make himself master of Egypt by force, because of the protection of the Romans, he wished to attempt it by craft. “He would fain corrupt her, but she shall not stand on his side, neither be for him. After this shall he turn his face unto the isles,” — that is to say, the sea-ports,— “and shall take many,” — as Appian relates.

“But a prince shall oppose his conquests and cause the reproach offered by him to cease,” — Scipio Africanus, who stopped the progress of Antiochus the Great because he offended the Romans in the person of their allies.— “He will return into his kingdom and perish and be no more.” — He was killed by his soldiers.

“And he who stands in his place shall be a tyrant, a raiser of taxes in the glory of the kingdom,” that is the people, Seleucus Philopator or Soter, the son of Antiochus the Great— “but within a few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger nor in battle;

“And in his place shall stand up a vile person, unworthy of the honour of the kingdom, but he shall come in by skilful flatteries.

“All armies shall bend before him, he will conquer them, and even the prince with whom he has made a league. For having renewed the league with him, he will deceive him, and come in with a few tribes into his province, calm and without fear. He will take the best places, and shall do that which his fathers have not done, and ravage on all sides. He will forecast devices, during his time.”

The zeal of the Jews for their law and their temple. Josephus and Philo the Jew *ad Caium*.

What other people has so great a zeal, but for them it was a necessity.

Jesus Christ foretold as to the time and the state of the world. The leader taken from the thigh, and the fourth monarchy.

How fortunate we are to have such light amid such darkness.

How grand it is to see by the eye of faith, Darius and Cyrus, Alexander, the Romans, Pompey and Herod working, though unconsciously, for the glory of the Gospel!

How grand to see by the eye of faith the histories of Herod, of Cæsar....

The reprobation of the Jews and conversion of the Gentiles. — Isaiah lxv. "I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that did not call upon my name.

"I have spread out my hands all the day unto an unbelieving people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts; a people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face; that sacrificeth to idols, etc.

"These shall be scattered like smoke in the day of my wrath, etc.

"Your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers will I gather, and will requite you according to your works.

"Thus saith the Lord, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it.

"So will I take a seed of Jacob and Judah to possess my mountains, and mine elect and my servants shall inherit it, and my fertile and abundant plains, but I will destroy all others, because you have forgotten your God to follow strange gods. I have called you and you have not answered, I have spoken and you have not heard, and you have chosen the things which I forbade.

"Therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry; my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed; my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry and howl for vexation of spirit.

“And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen: for the Lord shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name, that he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in God, etc.; because the former troubles are forgotten.

“For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former things shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.

“But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying....

“Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox: and dust shall be the serpent’s meat. They shall not hurt nor kill in all my holy mountain.”

Is. lvi. “Thus saith the Lord, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed.

“Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that keepeth my salvation and holdeth his hand from doing any evil.

“Neither let the strangers, that have joined themselves to the Lord, say, God will separate me from his people. For thus saith the Lord: Whoso will keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant; Even unto them will I give in mine house a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off....

“Therefore is judgment far from us: we wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness. We grope for the wall like the blind: we stumble at noon day as in the night; we are in desolate places as dead men.

“We roar all like bears, and mourn sore like doves: we look for judgment, but there is none; for salvation, but it is far from us.”

Isaiah lxvi. 18. “But I know their works and their thoughts: I come that I may gather all nations and tongues, and they shall see my glory.

“And I will set a sign among them, and I will send of them that shall be saved unto the nations, to Africa, to Lydia, to Italy, to Greece, and to the people that have not heard my name, neither have seen my glory. And they shall bring your brethren.”

Jer. vii. *Reprobation of the Temple.*

“But go ye to Shiloh, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people. And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the Lord, I will do unto this house, in which my name is called upon, wherein ye trust, and unto the place which I gave to your priests, as I have done to Shiloh.” For I have rejected it and made myself a temple elsewhere.

“And I will cast you out of my sight, as I have cast out all your brethren, the whole seed of Ephraim.” Rejected absolutely.

“Therefore pray not thou for this people.”

Jer. vii. 21. “What avails it you to add sacrifice to sacrifice? For I spake not unto your fathers, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices: But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people. For it was only after they had sacrificed to golden calves that I gave myself sacrifices to turn into good an evil custom.” Jer. vii. 4. “Trust not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, are these.”

Proofs by the Jews. — Captivity of the Jews without restoration. Jeremiah xi. 11. “I will bring evil on Judah which they shall not be able to escape.”

Types. — Isaiah v. “The Lord had a vineyard from which he looked for grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. I will therefore uproot and destroy it, the earth shall produce nothing but thorns, and I will forbid the heaven....

“The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant. I looked that they should do justice, and they bring forth only iniquities.”

Isaiah viii. “Sanctify the Lord with fear and trembling, and let him be your fear; but he shall be for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble against that stone, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken, and perish. Hide my words and cover my law for my disciples.

“And I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob.”

Isaiah xxix. “Be astonished, and wonder, O people of Israel; waver and stagger: be drunken, but not with wine; stagger, but not with strong drink. For the Lord hath mingled for you the spirit of deep sleep. He will shut up your eyes: he will cover your prophets and princes that see visions.” Daniel xii. “The wicked shall not understand, but the wise shall understand.” Hosea, the last chapter, the last verse, after many temporal blessings says: “Who is wise, and he shall understand these things,” etc.

“And the visions of all the prophets are become unto you as a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, and who can read: and he saith, I cannot read it; for it is sealed: And when the book is delivered to him that is not learned, he saith, I am not learned.

“Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me,” — there is the reason and the cause, for they adore God in their heart, and understand the prophecies,— “and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men.

“Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do among this people a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding....”

Prophecies. Proof of divinity. Isaiah xli.

“Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods: and we will incline our heart unto your words. Teach us the things that have been from the beginning and prophecy those that are to come.

“By this we shall know that ye are gods. Yea, do good, or do evil, if you can. Come now and let us reason together.

“Behold, ye are of nothing, and an abomination, etc. Who hath declared from the beginning, that we may know? and beforetime, that we may say, He is righteous? yea, there is none that sheweth, yea, there is none that declareth the future.”

Is. xlii. “I am the Lord: and my glory will I not give to another. I have foretold the former things which have come to pass, and declare those which are to come. Sing a new song to God in all the earth.”

“Bring forth the blind people that have eyes and see not, and the deaf that have ears and hear not. Let all the nations be gathered together. Who among them and their Gods can declare this, and shew us former things, and things to come? Let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified: or let them hear, and say, It is truth.

“Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he.

“I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed wonders in your eyes: therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God.

“For your sake I have sent to Babylon, and have brought down all their nobles. I am the Lord, your sanctifier and creator.

“I have made a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters; I am he that destroyed for ever the powerful enemies who have resisted you.

“Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old.

“Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.

“This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise, etc.

“I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. Put me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified. Thy first father hath sinned, and thy teachers have transgressed against me.” Is. xliv. “I am the first and the last, saith the Lord.

Whoso will equal himself to me, let him declare the order of things since I formed the first peoples, and the things which are to come. Fear ye not, have I not declared all these things, ye are my witnesses."

Prophecy of Cyrus— "Because of Jacob whom I have chosen I have called thee by thy name," "Come and let us reason together. Who has declared this from ancient time, and foretold things to come? have not I, the Lord."

Is. xlvi. "Remember the former things of old, and know that there is none like me. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

Is. xlii. 9. "Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them."

Is. xlviii. 3. "I have declared the former things from the beginning; and I shewed them; and they came to pass. Because I knew that thou art obstinate, that thy spirit is rebellious, and thy brow brass; I have even before it came to pass shewed it thee: lest thou shouldst say, that it was the work of thy Gods and the effect of their commands.

"Thou hast seen all this; and will not ye declare it? I have shewed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them. They are created now, and not from the beginning; even before the day when thou heardst them not; lest thou shouldst say, Behold, I knew them.

"Yea, thou heardest not; yea, thou knewest not; yea, from that time that thine ear was not opened: for I knew that thou wouldst deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb."

— *Prophecies. In Egypt. — Pugio Fidei*, 659. *Talmud.*

It is a tradition among us that when the Messiah shall come, the house of God, destined for the dispensation of his word, shall be full of filth and impurity, that the wisdom of the scribes shall be corrupt and rotten; that those who fear to sin shall be reproved by the people, and treated as fools and madmen.

Is. xlix.

“Listen, O isles, unto me, and hearken ye people from far: The Lord hath called me by my name even from the womb of my mother; he hath hid me in the shadow of his hand, he hath made my words like a sharp sword, and said: Thou art my servant, in whom I will be glorified. And I said, Lord, have I laboured in vain? have I spent my strength for nought? yet is my judgment with thee, O Lord, and my work before thee. When the Lord, who has formed me from the womb of my mother to be wholly for himself, in order to bring Jacob and Israel again to him, said unto me: Thou shalt be glorious in my sight, and I will be thy strength. It is a light thing that thou shouldst convert the tribes of Jacob; I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the ends of the earth. These are the things which the Lord hath said to him that humbleth his soul to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers. Princes and kings shall worship thee because the Lord is faithful that hath chosen thee.

“Again the Lord said unto me: I have heard thee in the days of salvation and of mercy, and I have established thee for a covenant of the people, and to cause thee to inherit the desolate nations, that thou mayest say to those who are in chains: Go forth, and to those that are in darkness: Come into the light, and possess these abundant and fertile lands. They shall no more labour, nor hunger, nor thirst, neither shall the sun smite them; for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of waters shall he guide them, and make the mountains plain before them. Behold, the peoples shall come from all parts, from the East and from the West, from the North and from the South. Let the heaven give glory to God, let the earth rejoice, for it hath pleased the Lord to comfort his people, and he will have mercy on the poor who hope in him.

“Yet Sion hath dared to say: The Lord hath forsaken and hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb, but if she forget, yet will I not forget thee, O Sion. I will bear thee always between my hands, and thy walls shall be ever before me. Thy

builders are come, thy destroyers shall go forth of thee. Lift up thy eyes round about, and see all these are gathered together, to come to thee: as I live, saith the Lord, thou shall be clothed with all these as with an ornament, thy deserts, and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction shall now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants, and the children of thy barrenness shall still say in thy ears: the place is too strait for me, make me room to dwell in. And thou shall say in thy heart: Who hath begotten these? I was barren and brought not forth, led away, and captive: and who hath brought up these? I was destitute and alone: and these, where were they? And the Lord shall say: Behold, I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles, and will set up my standard to the people. And they shall bring thy children in their arms, and in their bosoms. And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and queens thy nursing mothers: they shall worship thee with their face toward the earth, and they shall lick up the dust of thy feet. And thou shall know that I am the Lord, for they shall not be confounded that wait for him. Shall the prey be taken from the strong and mighty? But even if the captivity be taken away from the strong: nothing can hinder me to judge those that have judged thee, and thy children I will save. And all flesh shall know, that I am the Lord thy Saviour, and thy Redeemer the mighty One of Jacob.

“Thus saith the Lord: What is this divorcement, wherewith I have put away the synagogue, and why have I delivered it into the hands of your enemies; is it not for your iniquities and your transgressions that I have put it away?

“For I came, and no man would receive me, I called and none would hear. Is my arm shortened that I cannot save?

“Therefore will I show the tokens of my anger, I will clothe the heavens with darkness, and will make sackcloth their covering.

“The Lord hath given me the tongue of the learned that I should know how to uphold by word him that is weary. He hath wakened my ear, and I have heard him as a master.

“The Lord hath revealed his will and I was not rebellious.

“I gave my body to the smiters, and my cheeks to outrage, I hid not my face from shame and spitting, but the Lord has helped me, therefore I was not confounded.

“He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me, and accuse me of sin, since God himself is my protector?

“All men shall pass and be consumed by time, let those that fear the Lord hearken to the words of his servant, let him that languisheth in darkness put his trust in the Lord. But as for you, you do but set alight upon you the wrath of God, you walk upon the coals and among the flames you have kindled. This ye have of my hand, ye shall perish in sorrow.

“Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him when he was alone, and childless, and increased him. For the Lord has comforted Zion: and has heaped on her blessings and consolations.

“Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the Gentiles.”

Amos viii. The prophet having enumerated the sins of Israel, said that God had sworn to take vengeance on them.

He saith also: “And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord, that the sun shall go down at mid-day, and I will make the earth dark in the day of light: And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation.

“You shall have sorrow and suffering, and I will make the sorrow as the mourning of an only son, and the latter end thereof as a bitter day. Behold the days come, saith the Lord, and I will send forth a famine into the land: not a famine of bread, nor a thirst of water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. And they shall move from sea to sea, and from the North to the East: they shall go about seeking the word of the Lord, and shall not find it.

“In that day their fair virgins, and their young men shall faint for thirst. They that have followed the idols of Samaria, and sworn by the god of Dan; who have

followed the worship of Beersheba; they shall fall, and shall rise no more."

Amos iii. 2. "Of all nations of the earth, I have chosen you only to be my people."

Daniel xii. 7. Daniel having described all the extent of Messiah's reign, says, "All these things shall be done when the dispersion of my people shall be accomplished."

Haggai ii. 3. "You who compare this second house with the glory of the first and despise it. Yet now take courage, O Zerubbabel, saith the Lord, and take courage O Jesus the high priest, and take courage, all ye people of the land, and cease not to work. The word that I covenanted with you when you came out of the land of Egypt stands yet: and my spirit shall be in the midst of you: Lose not hope. For thus saith the Lord of hosts: Yet one little while, and I will move the heaven and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land," — a mode of speech to denote a great and extraordinary change. "And I will move all nations: and the desired of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory: saith the Lord.

"The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord," — that is to say, it is not by that that I will be honoured, as it is said in another place. All the beasts of the field are mine, what good is it to me that they are offered me in sacrifice?— "Greater shall be the glory of this latter house than of the first, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place I will establish my house, saith the Lord."

"According to all that you desired of the Lord God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let us not hear again the voice of the Lord, neither let us see this fire any more, that we die not. And the Lord said unto me, Their prayer is just. I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and I will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him."

Genesis xlix. “Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise, and thou shall vanquish thine enemies; thy father’s children shall bow down before thee. Judah, lion’s whelp, thou art gone up to the prey, O my son, and art couched as a lion, and as a lioness awakened.

“The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.”

OF TYPES IN GENERAL AND OF THEIR LAWFULNESS.



Proof of the two Testaments at once. — To prove both the Testaments at one stroke we need only see if the prophecies in one are accomplished in the other.

To examine the prophecies we must understand them.

For if we believe they have only one sense it is certain that Messiah has not come; but if they have two senses, it is certain that he has come in Jesus Christ.

The whole question then is to know if they have two senses....

That the Scripture has two senses, which Jesus Christ and his Apostles have given, the following are the proofs:

1. Proof by Scripture itself.

2. Proofs by the Rabbis. Moses Maimonides says that it has two faces, and that the prophets have prophesied Jesus Christ only.

3. Proofs by the Cabala.

4. Proofs by the mystical interpretation which the rabbis themselves have given to the Scripture.

5. Proofs by the principles laid down by the rabbis that there are two senses, that there are two advents of the Messiah; one in glory, and one in humiliation, according to their deserts; that the prophets have prophesied of Messiah only. The Law is not eternal, but must change when Messiah comes; that then they shall no more remember the Red Sea; that the Jews and the Gentiles shall be mingled.

It is as those among whom there is a certain secret language.

Those who do not understand it can see in it only a foolish sense.

Typical. — The figures of a sword, a shield.

Potentissime.

To change the type, because of our weakness.

Types. — The prophets prophesied by figures of a girdle, a beard and burnt hair, etc.

Two errors: 1, to take all literally; 2, to take all spiritually.

The veil which is upon these books for the Jews is there also for bad Christians, and for all who do not hate themselves.

But those who truly hate themselves are in a disposition to understand the Scriptures and to know Jesus Christ.

Types. — To show that the Old Testament is only figurative, and that by temporal possessions the prophets understood others, this is the proof: 1, that this were unworthy of God; 2, that their discourses express very clearly the promise of temporal possessions, and that they say nevertheless that their discourses are obscure, and that their sense will not be understood. Whence it appears that this secret sense is not that which they openly expressed, and that consequently they meant to speak of other sacrifices, of another deliverer, etc. They say that they will be understood only in the fulness of time. Jer. xxxiii.

The third proof is that their discourses are contradictory and destroy each other, so that if we think they did not mean by the words law and sacrifice aught else than those of Moses, there is a gross and obvious contradiction. Therefore they meant something else, occasionally contradicting themselves in the same chapter.

Now to understand the sense of an author....

A type brings with it absence and presence, pleasure and pain.

A cipher with a double sense, one clear, and in which it is said that the sense is hidden....

A portrait brings with it absence and presence, pleasure and pain. The reality excludes absence and pain.

Types. — To know if the law and the sacrifices are real or figurative, we must see if the prophets in speaking of these things limited their view and their thoughts to them, so that they saw only the old covenant; or if they saw in them somewhat else of which they were the semblance, for in a portrait we see the thing figured. For this we need only examine what they say.

When they speak of it as eternal, do they mean that same covenant which they elsewhere say will be changed; so of the sacrifices, etc.?

A cipher has two senses. If we intercept an important letter in which we see an obvious meaning, wherein it is nevertheless declared that the sense is veiled and obscure, that it is concealed, so that the letter might be read without discovering it, and understood without understanding, we can but think that here is a cipher with a double sense, and all the more if we find manifest contradictions in the literal sense. How greatly we ought to value those who interpret the cipher, and explain to us the hidden sense, especially if the principles they extract are wholly natural and clear. This is what Jesus Christ did, and the Apostles. They broke the seal, he rent the veil, and revealed the spirit. They have thereby taught us that man's enemies are his passions; that the Redeemer is to be spiritual and his reign spiritual; that there are to be two advents, one in lowliness to abase the proud, the other in glory to exalt the humble; that Jesus Christ is God and man.

The prophets said clearly that Israel would be always the beloved of God, that the law would be eternal, they have said also that their meaning would not be understood, and that it was veiled.

Types. — When the word of God, which cannot lie, is false literally, it is true spiritually. *Sede a dextris meis*, is false literally, therefore it is true spiritually.

In these expressions God is spoken of after the manner of men, and this means only that the intention which men have in giving a seat at their right hand, God will also have. It is then a mark of the intention of God, not of his mode of carrying it out.

Thus when it is said "God has received the odour of your incense and will in return give you a fat land," this means that the same intention which a man will have, who, pleased with your perfumes, will give you a fat land, God will have towards you, because you have had towards him the same intention as a man has for him to whom he offers a sweet savour. So *iratus est*, a jealous God, etc., for the things of God being inexpressible, they cannot be said otherwise. And the Church uses them still: *Quia confortavit seras*, etc.

Difference between dinner and supper.

In God the word differs not from the intention, for he is true, nor the word from the effect, for he is powerful, nor the means from the effect, for he is wise. Bern. *ult. sermo in Missam*.

Aug., *de Civit.* v. 10. This rule is general. God can do all, except those things which if he could do he would not be almighty, as dying, being deceived, lying, etc.

Many evangelists for the confirmation of the truth. Their differences are useful.

The Eucharist after the Lord's Supper. Truth after the type.

The ruin of Jerusalem, a type of the ruin of the world, forty years after the death of Jesus.

"I know not" as a man or as an ambassador. Matt. xxiv. 36.

Jesus condemned by the Jews and the Gentiles.

The Jews and the Gentiles figured by the two sons.

Aug. *de Civit.* xx. 29.

The figures of the Gospel for the state of the sick soul are sick bodies, but because one body cannot be sufficiently sick to express it well, several are needed. Thus there are the deaf, the dumb, the blind, the paralytic, the dead Lazarus, the possessed; all this together is in the sick soul.

Isaiah, li. The Red Sea an image of the Redemption.

"*Ut sciatis quod filius hominis habet potestatem remittendi peccata, tibi dico: Surge.*"

God, willing to show that he was able to form a people holy with an invisible holiness, and to fill them with an eternal glory, made visible things. As nature is an image of grace, he has done in the excellences of nature what he would accomplish in those of grace, in order that men might judge that he could make the invisible since he made the visible so well.

Thus he saved this people from the deluge, he has raised them up from Abraham, redeemed them from their enemies, and caused them to enter into rest.

The object of God was not to save them from the deluge, and raise up a whole people to Abraham, only in order to bring them into a fat land.

And so grace itself is but the figure of glory, for it is not the ultimate end. It was symbolised by the law, and itself symbolises grace, but it is the figure of it, and the origin or cause.

The ordinary life of man is like that of the saints. They all seek their satisfaction, and differ only in the object wherein they place it; they call those their enemies who hinder them, etc. God then has shown the power which he has to give invisible possessions, by the power which he has shown over things visible.

And yet this covenant, made to blind some and enlighten others, marked in those very men whom it blinded the truth which should be recognised by others. For the visible possessions which they received from God were so great and so

divine that it certainly appeared he was able to give them those which are invisible, as well as a Messiah.

For nature is an image of grace, and visible miracles are the image of the invisible. *Ut sciatis, tibi dico: Surge.*

Isaiah, li., says that Redemption will be as the passage of the Red Sea.

God then has shown by the deliverance from Egypt, and from the sea, by the defeat of the kings, by the manna, by the whole genealogy of Abraham, that he was able to save, to send down bread from heaven, etc., so that the people at enmity with him is the type and the representation of the very Messiah whom they know not, etc.

He has then shown us at last that all these things were only types, and what is true freedom, a true Israelite, true circumcision, true bread from heaven, etc.

In these promises each man finds what he chiefly desires, temporal possessions or spiritual, God or the creatures; but with this difference, that those who therein seek the creatures find them, but attended by many contradictions, with a prohibition against loving them, with the injunction to worship God only, and to love him only, which is the same thing, and finally that the Messiah came not for them; whilst on the contrary those who therein seek God find him, without any contradiction, with the injunction to love him only, and that the Messiah came in the time foretold, to give them the possessions which they ask.

Thus the Jews had miracles and prophecies, of which they saw the accomplishment, and the teaching of their law was that they should love and worship God alone; it was also perpetual. Thus it had all the marks of the true religion, as indeed it was, but we must distinguish between the teaching of the Jews, and the teaching of the Jewish law. Now the teaching of the Jews was not true, although it had miracles and prophecy and perpetuity, because it had not this further point, the worship and love of God only.

The reason of types.

They had to deal with a carnal people, and to render them the depositary of a spiritual covenant.

To give faith in the Messiah it was necessary there should have been antecedent prophecies, in the charge of persons above suspicion, diligent, faithful, singularly zealous, and known to all the world.

That all this might be accomplished, God chose this carnal people, to whom he entrusted the prophecies which foretell the Messiah as a deliverer, and as a dispenser of those carnal possessions which the people loved. And thus they have had an extraordinary zeal for their prophets, and, in sight of the whole world, have had charge of these books which foretell their Messiah, assuring all the nations that he should come, and in the manner foretold in their books, which they held open to all the world. But this people deceived by the poor and ignominious advent of the Messiah have been his most cruel enemies. So that they, who were of all nations in the world the least open to the suspicion of favouring us, the most scrupulous and most zealous that can be named for their law and their prophets, have kept the records incorrupt.

Therefore the prophecies have a hidden and spiritual sense, which this people hated, under the carnal sense which they loved. Had the spiritual sense been disclosed, it being such as they were unable to love, or even to bear, they would not have been zealous to preserve their books and their ceremonies; and if they had loved these spiritual promises, and had preserved them incorrupt till Messiah came, their witness would have had no force, because they had been his friends. Therefore it was well that the spiritual sense should be concealed; but on the other hand, had the sense been so hidden as not to be at all apparent, it could not have served as a proof of the Messiah. What then was done? In a crowd of passages the spiritual was concealed under the temporal sense, and has been clearly revealed in a few; again, the time and the state of the world were so clearly foretold that the sun is not so evident. And in some passages this spiritual sense is so dearly

expressed that no less a blindness than that which the flesh imposes on the spirit when enslaved, can keep us from discerning it.

See then what God has done. This sense is concealed under another in an infinite number of passages, in some, though rarely, it is revealed, yet so that the passages in which it is concealed are equivocal, and can suit both senses, while those in which it is disclosed are unequivocal, and can agree with the spiritual sense alone.

So that this cannot lead us into error, and could only be misunderstood by so carnal a people.

For when possessions are promised in abundance, what could hinder them from understanding the true possessions, save their covetousness, which limited the sense to the good things of this world? But those whose only good was in God referred the sense to him alone. For there are two qualities which divide the will of man, covetousness and charity. Not that covetousness cannot coexist with faith in God, nor charity with worldly possessions, but covetousness uses God, and enjoys the world, while the opposite is the case with charity.

Now the end we pursue gives names to things. All which hinders the attainment of this end, is said to be at enmity with us. Thus the creatures, however good, are the enemies of the just, when they turn them aside from God, and God himself is the enemy of those whose greed he opposes.

Hence the word enemy being interpreted according to the end proposed, the just understood by it their passions, and the carnal understood the Babylonians, so that the term is obscure only for the unrighteous. And this is what Isaiah says: *Signa legem in electis meis*, and that Jesus Christ shall be a stone of stumbling. But, “Blessed are they who shall not be offended in him!” Hosea, xiv. 9, says excellently: “Where is the wise, and he shall understand these things. The just shall know them, for the ways of God are right, but the transgressors shall fall therein.”

So that those who rejected and crucified Jesus Christ, being offended at him, are the same people who bear the books which witness of him, and which say that

he will be rejected and a stumbling stone, so that their refusal has given an additional mark that it is he, and he has been proved both by the just Jews who received him, and the unjust Jews who rejected him, both of whom were foretold.

One of the main reasons why the prophets put a veil on the spiritual possessions which they promised under the figure of temporal possessions is, that they had to do with a carnal people whom they must make the keepers of the spiritual covenant.

Jesus Christ, prefigured by Joseph, the beloved of his father, sent by his father to visit his brethren, etc., innocent, sold by his brethren for twenty pieces of silver, and thereby becoming their lord, their saviour, the saviour of strangers, and the saviour of the world; all which had not been brought about but for the plot for his destruction, their sale and rejection of him.

In prison Joseph innocent between two criminals; Jesus Christ on the cross between two thieves. Joseph foretold deliverance to the one, and death to the other, from the same omens. Jesus Christ saves the elect, and condemns the reprobate after the same crimes. Joseph foretold only, Jesus Christ acts. Joseph asked of him who is saved to be mindful of him when he has come into his glory, and he whom Jesus Christ saved asked that he would remember him when he came into his Kingdom.

Types. — Saviour, father, sacrificer, sacrifice, food, king, wise, lawgiver, afflicted, poor, having to create a people, which he must lead and nourish, and bring into the land.

Fascination. — *Somnum suum. Figura hujus mundi.*

The Eucharist. — *Comedes panem tuum. Panem nostrum.*

Inimici Dei terram lingent. The sinners lick the dust, that is to say, love earthly pleasures.

The Old Testament contained the types of future joy, and the New contains the means of attaining it.

The types were of joy, the means of penitence, and nevertheless the Paschal Lamb was eaten with bitter herbs, *cum amaritudinibus*.

Singularis sum ego donec transeam. Jesus Christ before his death was almost the only martyr.

To speak against too greatly figurative expressions.

There are some types clear and demonstrative, but others which seem far-fetched, and which bring proof only to those already persuaded. These may seem like the sayings of the Apocalyptics. But the difference is that these have none which are not doubtful, so that nothing is so unjust as to pretend that theirs are as well founded as some of ours, for they have none so demonstrative as some of ours. There is no comparison possible. We have no right to compare and confound things because they agree in one point, while they are so different in another. What is clear in things divine forces us to revere what is obscure.

I do not say that the *mem* is a mystery.

We may not attribute to the Scripture the sense which it has not revealed to us that it contains. Thus, to say that the closed *mem* of Isaiah means six hundred, has not been revealed. It might be said that the final *tsadé* and the *he deficientes* signify mysteries. But we are not allowed to say so, and still less to say this is the way of the philosopher's stone. But we say that the literal sense is not the true sense, because the prophets said so themselves.

Extravagances of the Apocalyptics, Preadamites, Millenarians, etc. — Whoever would found extravagant opinions on the Scripture will for instance found them on the fact that:

It is said that “This generation shall not pass away till all these things be fulfilled.” On that I will say that after that generation will come another generation, and so in constant succession.

The Second Book of Chronicles speaks of Solomon and the King as if they were two different persons. I say that they were two.

Against those who misuse passages of Scripture, and who are puffed up when they find one which seems to favour their error.

The chapter for Vespers, on Passion Sunday, the prayer for the King.

Explanation of these words: “He that is not with me is against me.” And these others: “He that is not against you is with you.” A person who says: I am neither for nor against; we ought to answer him.... One of the Antiphons for Vespers at Christmas: *Exortum est in tenebris lumen rectis corde*.

THAT THE JEWISH LAW WAS FIGURATIVE.



Contradiction. — It is not possible to give a good expression to a portrait save by bringing all contraries into harmony, and it is not enough to dwell upon a series of accordant qualities, without reconciling the contraries. To understand the meaning of an author we must harmonise all the contrary passages.

Thus, to understand Scripture, we must find a sense in which all the contrary passages are reconciled; it is not enough to have one which agrees with many consonant passages, but we must find one which reconciles even dissonant passages.

Every author has a sense in which all the contradictory passages agree, or he has no meaning at all. The latter cannot be said of Scripture and the prophets, which assuredly abound in good sense. We must then seek for a meaning which harmonises all contraries.

The true sense then is not that of the Jews, but in Jesus Christ all dissonances are brought into harmony.

The Jews could not make the cessation of the royalty and principality foretold by Hosea accord with the prophecy of Jacob.

If we take the law, the sacrifices, the kingdom as realities, we cannot reconcile all the passages. Of necessity then they are but figures. We cannot even reconcile the passages of the same author, nor of the same book, nor sometimes of the same chapter, which abundantly denotes what was the meaning of the author. As when Ezekiel, chap. xx., says that man will live by the commandments of God and will not live by them.

It was not lawful to sacrifice elsewhere than at Jerusalem, the place which the Lord had chosen, nor even to eat the tithes in any other place. Deut. xii. 5, etc.;

Deut. xiv. 23, etc.; xv. 20; xvi. 2-15.

Hosea foretold that the Jews should be without king, without prince, without sacrifice and without idols, which is accomplished at this day, since they are not able to make a lawful sacrifice out of Jerusalem.

Types. — If the law and the sacrifices are the truth it must be pleasing to God, and not displeasing to him. If they are figures they must be both pleasing and displeasing.

Now through the whole of Scripture they are both pleasing and displeasing. It is said that the law shall be changed, that the sacrifice shall be changed, that they shall be without law, without a prince and without sacrifices, that a new covenant shall be made, that the law shall be renewed, that the precepts which they have received are not good, that their sacrifices are abominations, that God has required none of them.

It is said, on the contrary, that the law shall abide for ever, that the covenant shall be eternal, that sacrifice shall be eternal, that the sceptre shall never depart from among them, because it shall not depart from them till the coming of the eternal King.

Now are all these passages obviously literal? No. Are they obviously typical? No, they are obviously either real or typical. But the first set, which bar a literal interpretation, prove that the whole are typical.

All these passages together cannot apply to the thing signified, all can apply to the type, therefore they are not spoken of the thing signified, but of the type.

Agnus occisus est ab origine mundi. A sacrificing judge.

Types. — God willing to form to himself an holy people, whom he should separate from all other nations, whom he should deliver from their enemies, and should establish in a place of rest, has not only promised this, but has foretold by his prophets the time and the manner of his coming. And yet, to confirm the hope of his elect through all ages, he made them to see it in a figure, but never left them without assurances of his power and of his will to save them. For at the creation

of man, Adam was the witness, and the guardian of the promise made concerning the Saviour who should be born of the woman, when men were still so near the creation that they could not have forgotten their creation and their fall. When those who had seen Adam were no longer in the world, God sent Noah, whom he saved, and drowned the whole earth by a miracle which marked sufficiently both the power which he had to save the world, and the will which he had to do so; and to raise up of the seed of the woman him whom he had promised.

This miracle was enough to confirm the hope of men. The memory of the deluge being fresh among men while Noah was still living, God made promises to Abraham, and while Shem was still living God sent Moses, etc....

Types. — God, willing to deprive his own of perishable possessions, made the Jewish people in order to show that this arose from no lack of power.

The Jews had grown old in these earthly thoughts, that God loved their father Abraham, his flesh, and all that would spring from it; that for this reason he had multiplied them, and set them apart from all other peoples, without allowing them to intermingle; that when they were languishing in Egypt he brought them out with many wonderful signs in their favour; that he fed them with manna in the wilderness, and brought them out into a very fat land; that he gave them kings and a well-built temple, there to offer beasts before him, by the shedding of whose blood they were purified; that at last he would send Messiah to make them masters of the whole world, and foretold the time of his coming.

The world having grown old in these carnal errors, Jesus Christ came at the time foretold, but not with the expected glory, and therefore men did not think it was he. After his death Saint Paul came to teach that all these things had happened in figures, that the Kingdom of God was not in the flesh, but in the spirit; that the enemies of men were not the Babylonians, but the passions; that God delighted not in temples made with hands, but in a pure and contrite heart;

that bodily circumcision was unprofitable, but that of the heart was needed; that Moses gave them not that bread from heaven, etc.

But God, not willing to disclose these things to a people unworthy of them, yet nevertheless willing to foretell them, in order that they might be believed, foretold the time dearly, and expressed the things sometimes clearly, but generally in figures, so that those who loved the emblems might rest in them, and those who loved the things figured might see them therein.

All that tends not to charity is figurative.

The sole aim of the Scripture is charity.

All which tends not to that only end is figurative, for since there is but one end, all which does not refer to it in express terms is figurative.

God has so varied that sole precept of charity to satisfy our curiosity, which seeks for diversity, by that diversity which still leads us to the one thing needful. For one only thing is needful, yet we love diversity, and God satisfies both by these diversities, which lead to the one thing needful.

The Jews so loved the mere shadows, and waited for them so entirely, that they misunderstood the substance, when it came in the time and manner foretold.

The rabbis take the breasts of the Spouse for figures, as they do every thing which does not express the only aim they had, that of temporal good.

And Christians take even the Eucharist as a type of the glory for which they strive.

Charity is no figurative precept. It is horrible to say that Jesus Christ, who came to take away the figure and establish the truth, came only to establish the type of charity and take away the existing reality.

If the light be darkness, what must the darkness be?

When David foretold that Messiah would deliver his people from their enemies, we may believe that these according to the flesh were the Egyptians, and then I know not how to show that the prophecy was fulfilled. But we may well

believe also that the enemies were their sins, for in truth the Egyptians were not their enemies, and their sins were. This word enemies is therefore equivocal.

But if he say, as in fact he does elsewhere, that he will save his people from their sins, as do also Isaiah and others, the ambiguity is removed, and the double sense of enemies is reduced to the single sense of iniquities. For if he had sins in his mind he might well denote them by the word enemies, but if he thought of enemies, he could not designate them by the word iniquities.

Now Moses, David, and Isaiah employ the same terms. Who will say then that they have not all the same meaning, and that the sense of David which is plainly that of iniquities when he spoke of enemies, is not the same as that of Moses when speaking of enemies.

Daniel prays that the people may be delivered from the captivity of their enemies, but he was thinking of sins, and to show this, he says that Gabriel came to tell him that his prayer was heard, and that there were only seventy weeks to wait, after which the nation would be delivered from iniquity, that sin would have an end, and the Redeemer, the Most Holy, should bring in eternal righteousness, not legal, but eternal.

The Jews had a doctrine of God as we have one of Jesus Christ, and confirmed by miracles; they were forbidden to believe every worker of miracles, and more, they were ordered to have recourse to the chief priests, on whom only they should rely.

Thus, in regard to their prophets, they had all those reasons which we have for refusing to believe the workers of miracles.

And yet they were very blameworthy in refusing the prophets because of their miracles, and had not been blameworthy had they not seen the miracles. *Nisi fecissem, peccatum non haberent.*

Therefore all belief rests on miracles.

Whoever estimates the Jewish religion by its coarser minds will know it but ill. It is to be seen in the sacred books, and in the tradition of the prophets, who have made it plain enough that they did not understand the law according to the letter. So our Religion is divine in the Gospel, in the Apostles, and in tradition, but ridiculous in those who corrupt it.

The Messiah, according to the carnal Jews, was to be a mighty temporal prince. Jesus Christ, according to carnal Christians, has come to dispense us from the love of God, and to give us sacraments which shall operate without our concurrence. This is no more the Christian religion than was the other the Jewish.

True Jews and true Christians have always expected a Messiah who should inspire them with the love of God, and by that love should make them triumph over all their enemies.

The carnal Jews hold a midway place between Christians and Pagans. The Pagans know not God, and love this world only. The Jews know the true God, and love this world only. Christians know the true God, and love not the world. Jews and Pagans love the same good. Jews and Christians know the same God.

The Jews were of two kinds, one having merely Pagan, the other having Christian affections.

The carnal Jews understood neither the greatness nor the humiliation of Messiah as foretold by their prophecies. They misunderstood him in his foretold greatness, as when he said that Messiah should be lord of David, through his son, and that he was before Abraham who yet had seen him. They did not believe him so great as to be eternal, and so too they misunderstood him in his humiliation and in his death. Messiah, said they, abideth for ever, and this man has said that he shall die. They believed him then neither mortal nor eternal, and they only looked in him for a carnal greatness.

Typical. — God availed himself of the lust of the Jews to make them avail for Jesus Christ.

Typical. — Nothing is so like charity as covetousness, and nothing is so contrary to it. Thus the Jews, full of possessions which flattered their covetousness, were very like Christians and very contrary. And by this means they had the two qualities which were necessary to them, to be very like the Messiah in order to be figures of him, and very contrary that they might not be suspected witnesses.

Antiquity of the Jews. — What difference there is between book and book. I am not surprised that the Greeks made the Iliad, nor the Egyptians and the Chinese their histories.

We have only to see how this comes about. These fabulous historians are not contemporaneous with the facts they narrate. Homer writes a romance, which he puts forth as such, and which is received as such, for no one supposed that Troy or Agamemnon existed more than did the golden apple. So he thought not of making a history, but solely a book to amuse; he is the only man who wrote in his time, the beauty of his work has made it last, every one learns it and talks of it, we are bound to know it, and we each get it by heart. Four hundred years afterwards the witnesses of these things are no more, no one knows of his own knowledge if it be fable or history; he has only learnt it from his ancestors, and this may pass for true.

The sincerity of the Jews. — They preserve with faithfulness and zeal the book in which Moses declares that they have been all their life ungrateful to God, and that he knows they will be still more so after his death; that he therefore calls heaven and earth to witness against them, and that he has taught them enough.

He declares that finally God, being angry with them, would scatter them among all the nations of the earth, that as they have angered him, in worshipping

gods who were not their God, so he will provoke them by calling a people which is not his people, and wills that all his words shall be eternally preserved, and that his book shall be placed in the Ark of the Covenant to serve for ever as a witness against them.

Isaiah says the same thing, xxx. 8.

However, they have kept at the cost of their life this very book which dishonours them in so many ways. This is a sincerity which has no example in the world, and no root in nature.

Every history which is not contemporaneous is open to suspicion, thus the books of the Sibyls and Trismegistus and so many others which have been credited by the world are false, and found to be false in course of time. It is not so with contemporaneous authors.

There is a great difference between a book written by a private man, and dispersed among a whole people, and a book which itself creates a people. We cannot doubt that the book is as old as the people.

The sincerity of the Jews.

Defective and final letters.

Sincere against their honour, and dying in its defence; this has no example in the world's history, and no root in nature.

They are visibly a people expressly formed to serve as witnesses to the Messiah, Isaiah xliii. 9; xliv. 8, they bear the books, and love them while they understand them not. And all this was foretold, that God's judgments might be entrusted to them, but as a sealed book.

Types. — When once the secret is disclosed it is impossible not to see it If the Old Testament be read in this light, we shall see if the sacrifices were real; if the

fatherhood of Abraham was the true cause of the friendship of God; that the promised land was not the true place of rest. These were then but types. If in the same way we examine all those ordained ceremonies, and all those commandments which are not of charity, we shall see that they are types.

All these sacrifices and ceremonies were then either figures or absurdities. But there are things which are clear, and yet too lofty for us to think them absurdities.

Adam *forma futuri*. Six days to form the one, six ages to form the other. The six days which Moses represents for the formation of Adam, are but the representation of the six ages to form Jesus Christ and the Church. If Adam had not sinned, and Jesus Christ had not come, there had been only one covenant, only one age of men, and the creation would have been represented as done at one single time.

The six ages, the six Fathers of the six ages, the six miracles at the opening of the six ages, the six mornings at the opening of the six ages.

Types. — The Jewish and Egyptian peoples were visibly foretold by the two men whom Moses met, the Egyptian beating the Jew, Moses avenging him and slaying the Egyptian while the Jew was ungrateful.

The conversion of the Egyptians, Isaiah xix. 19. An altar in Egypt to the true God.

The sabbath was only a sign, Exodus xxxi. 13, and in memory of the deliverance from Egypt. Deut. v. 19. Therefore it is no more necessary, for we ought to forget Egypt.

Circumcision was only a sign, Gen. xvii. 13, therefore it came to pass that in the desert they were not circumcised, because they could not be confounded with other peoples, and after Jesus Christ came it was no longer needful.

Those who ordained these sacrifices knew their uselessness, and those who have declared their uselessness, ceased not to practise them.

Your name shall be accursed to my elect, and I will give them another name.

Harden their heart. How? By flattering their lust, and making them hope to accomplish it.

Fac secundum exemplar quod tibi ostensum est in monte.

The Jewish religion then was formed on its likeness to the truth of the Messiah, and the truth of the Messiah was recognised by the religion of the Jews which was the figure of it.

Among the Jews the truth was only prefigured. In heaven it is revealed.

In the Church it is hidden, yet recognised by its correspondence with the type.

The type was made according to the truth, and the truth is recognised according to the type.

Saint Paul says himself that people would forbid to marry, and he himself speaks to the Corinthians, in a way which is a trap. For if a prophet had said the one, and Saint Paul had afterwards said the other, he would have been accused.

Typical. — Make all things like unto the pattern which was showed thee in the mount. On which Saint Paul says that the Jews shadowed forth heavenly things.

Typical. The key of the cipher. *Veri adoratores. Ecce agnus Dei qui tollit peccata mundi.*

That the law was typical. Types. — The letter kills. All happened in a figure. This is the cipher which Saint Paul gives us. Christ must suffer. An humiliated God. Circumcision of the heart, a true fast, a true sacrifice, a true temple. The prophets indicated that all these must be spiritual.

Not the meat which perishes, but that which perishes not.

You shall be free indeed. Then the former liberty was only a type of liberty.

I am the true bread from heaven.

Particular types. — A double law, double tables of the law, a double temple, a double captivity.

The Synagogue did not perish because it was a type, but because it was no more than a type it fell into servitude. The type subsisted till the reality came, in order that the Church should be always visible, either in the representation which promised it, or in the substance.

In the time of the Messiah the people were divided. Those that were spiritual embraced the Messiah, the carnal remained to serve as witnesses of him.

OF THE TRUE RELIGION AND ITS CHARACTERISTICS.



For Port Royal. The Beginning, after having explained the incomprehensibility. — Since the greatness and the vileness of man are so evident, it is necessary that the true religion should declare both that there is in man some great principle of greatness, and a great principle of vileness.

It must therefore explain these astonishing contradictions.

In order to make man happy, it must show him that there is a God; that we ought to love him; that our true happiness is to be in him, our sole evil to be separated from him; it must recognise that we are full of darkness which hinders us from knowing and loving him; and that thus, as our duties oblige us to love God, and our lusts turn us from him, we are full of injustice. It must explain to us our opposition to God and to our own good; it must teach us the remedies for these infirmities, and the means of obtaining them. We must therefore examine all the religions of the world from this point of view, and see if there be any other than the Christian which is sufficient for this end.

Shall it be that of the philosophers, who proposed as the only good the good which is in ourselves? Is this the true good? Have they found a remedy for our evils? Is the pride of man cured by equalling him with God? Have those who would level us to the brutes, or the Mahomedans who present us with pleasures of the world as the sole good, even in eternity, found any remedy for our lusts? What religion then will teach us to cure our pride and our lust? What religion will teach us our good, our duty, the infirmity which turns us from it, the cause of this infirmity, the remedies which can cure it, and the means of obtaining those remedies? All other religions have failed, let us see what the wisdom of God can do.

"Look neither for truth," she says, "nor consolation from men. I am she who framed you, and who alone can teach you what you are. But you are not now in the state in which I framed you. I created man holy, innocent, perfect; I filled him with light and intelligence; I communicated to him my glory and my wondrous acts. The eye of man beheld then the majesty of God; he was not then in the darkness which blinds him, nor subject to death and the miseries which afflict him. But he could not bear so great a glory without falling into pride. He would make himself his own centre, and independent of my aid. He withdrew himself from my rule; and when he made himself equal to me by the desire of finding his happiness in himself, I gave him over to self. Then setting in revolt the creatures that were subject to him, I made them his enemies; so that man is now become like the beasts, and removed from me until there scarce remains to him a confused ray of his Creator, so far has all his knowledge become extinguished or disturbed. His senses, never the servants, and often the masters of reason, have carried him astray in pursuit of pleasure. All creatures either torment or tempt him; and have dominion over him, either as they subdue him by their strength, or as they melt him by their charms, a tyranny more terrible and more imperious.

"Such is the present state of man. There remains to him some feeble instinct of the happiness of his primitive nature, and he is plunged in the misery of his blindness and his lusts, which have become his second nature.

"From this principle which I have here laid open to you, you may discern the cause of those contradictions which, while they astonish all men, have divided them among such various opinions. Now mark all the movements of greatness and glory which the trials of so many miseries are unable to stifle, and see if the cause of them must not be in another nature...."

For Port Royal to-morrow. Prosopopœa.— "It is in vain, O men, that you seek from yourselves the remedy for your miseries. All your light can only enable you to know that not in yourselves will you find truth or good. The Philosophers promised you these, but gave them not. They neither apprehend what is your true good nor what is....

“How could they then apply remedies to your diseases, since they did not even know them? Your chief maladies are pride, which alienates you from God, and lust, which binds you down to earth; and they do nought else but nourish one or the other of these disorders. If they presented God as your end it was only done to gratify your pride; by making you think that you are by nature like him and conformed to him. Those who saw the extravagance of such an assertion did but set you on an opposite precipice, by tempting you to believe that your nature was of a piece with that of the beasts, and by inclining you to seek your good in the lusts which are shared by brutes. This is not the way to cure you of your unrighteousness, which these sages never knew. I alone can teach you who you are....

“If you are united to God it is by grace, not by nature.

“If you are abased it is by penitence, not by nature. So this twofold capacity....

“You are not in the state wherein you were created.

“These two states being presented to you, you cannot but recognise them.

“Follow your own movements, observe yourselves, and see if you do not trace the lively characters of these two natures.

“Could so many contradictions be found in a subject that was simple?”

I do not mean that you should submit your belief to me without reason, neither do I aim at your subjection by tyranny. I do not aim at giving you a reason for everything. And to reconcile these contradictions, I wish to make you see by convincing proofs, those divine tokens in me, which will assure you who I am and will verify my authority by wonders and proofs which you cannot reject; so that you may then have a reasonable belief in what I teach you, when you find no other ground for refusing it, but that you cannot know of yourselves whether it is true or not.

The true nature of man, his true good, true virtue and true religion are things of which the knowledge is inseparable.

After having understood the whole nature of man. — That a religion may be true, it must show knowledge of our nature. It must know its greatness and meanness, and the cause of both. What religion but the Christian has shown this knowledge?

The true religion teaches our duties; our weaknesses, pride and lust; and the remedies, humility and mortification.

The true religion must teach greatness and misery; must lead to the esteem and despising of self; to love and to hate.

The note of true religion must be that it obliges man to love his God. This is very right, and yet no other religion than ours has thus commanded; ours has done so. It must also be cognizant of man's lust and weakness, ours is so. It must have applied remedies for these defects; one is prayer. No other religion has asked of God the power to love and obey him.

If there be one only origin of all things, there must be one only end of all things; all by him, all for him. The true religion then must teach us to adore him only, and to love him only. But since we find ourselves unable to adore what we know not, or to love aught but ourselves, the same religion which instructs us in these duties must instruct us also of this inability, and teach us also the remedies for it. It teaches us that by one man all was lost, and the bond broken between God and us, and that by one man the bond has been repaired.

We are born so contrary to this love of God, and it is so necessary that we must be born sinful, or God would be unjust.

Every religion is false which as to its faith does not adore one God as origin of all things, and as to its morals does not love one sole God as the object of all things.

In every religion we must be sincere, true heathens, true Jews, true Christians.

THE EXCELLENCE OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.



WHEN I SEE the blindness and the misery of man, when I survey the whole dumb Universe, and man without light, left to himself, and lost, as it were, in this corner of the Universe, not knowing who has placed him here, what he has come to do, what will become of him when he dies, and incapable of any knowledge whatever, I fall into terror like that of a man who, having been carried in his sleep to an island desert and terrible, should awake ignorant of his whereabouts and with no means of escape; and thereupon I wonder how those in so miserable a state do not fall into despair. I see other persons around me, of like nature, I ask them if they are better informed than I am, and they say they are not; and thereupon these miserable wanderers, having looked around them, and seen some objects pleasing to them, have given and attached themselves to these. As for me, I cannot attach myself to them, and considering how strongly appearances show that there is something else than what is visible to me, I have sought to discover whether this God have not left some impress of himself.

I see many contrary religions, and consequently all false but one. Each wishes to be believed on its own authority, and menaces the unbeliever, but I do not therefore believe them. Every one can say the same, and every one can call himself a prophet. But I see the Christian religion fulfilling prophecy, and that is what every one can not do.

Without this divine knowledge what could men do but either uplift themselves by that inward conviction of their past greatness still remaining to them, or be cast down in view of their present infirmity? For, not seeing the whole truth, they could not attain to perfect virtue. Some considering nature as incorrupt, others as incurable, they could not escape either pride or idleness, the two sources of all

vice; since they cannot but either abandon themselves to it by cowardice, or escape it by pride. For if they were aware of the excellency of man, they were ignorant of his corruption, so that they very easily avoided idleness, but only to fall into pride. And if they recognized the infirmity of nature, they knew not its dignity, so that though they might easily avoid presumption, it was only to plunge into despair.

Thence come the various sects of the Stoics and Epicureans, the Dogmatists, Academicians, etc. The Christian religion alone has been able to cure these two distempers, not so as to drive out the one by the other according to the wisdom of the world, but so as to expel them both by the simplicity of the Gospel. For it teaches the righteous that it lifts them even to a participation of the divine nature; that in this exalted state they still bear within them the fountain of all corruption, which renders them during their whole life subject to error and misery, to death and sin; and at the same time it proclaims to the most wicked that they can receive the grace of their Redeemer. Thus making those tremble whom it justifies, and consoling those whom it condemns, religion so justly tempers fear with hope by means of that double capacity of grace and of sin which is common to all, that it abases infinitely more than reason alone, yet without despair; and exalts infinitely higher than natural pride, yet without puffing up: hereby proving that alone being exempt from error and vice, it alone has the office of instructing and of reforming men.

Who then can withhold credence and adoration to so divine a light? For it is clearer than day that we feel within ourselves indelible characters of goodness; and it is equally true that we experience every hour the effects of our deplorable condition. This chaos then, this monstrous confusion, does but proclaim the truth of these two states, with a voice so powerful that it cannot be resisted.

The Philosophers never prescribed feelings proper to these two states.

They inspired motions of simple greatness, and that is not the state of man.

They inspired motions of simple vileness, and that is not the state of man.

There must be motions of abasement, yet not from nature, but from penitence, not to rest in them, but to go onward to greatness. There must be motions of greatness, not from merit, but from grace, and after having passed through abasement.

This double nature of man is so evident, that there are those who have imagined us to have two souls.

One single subject seemed to them incapable of so great and sudden variations from unmeasured pride to an horrible dejection of spirit.

All these contradictions which seemed to have taken me further from the knowledge of religion, are what most rapidly led me into truth.

Did we not know ourselves full of pride, ambition, lust, weakness, misery and injustice, we were indeed blind. And if knowing this we did not desire deliverance, what could be said of a man.... What then can we feel but esteem for that Religion which is so well acquainted with the defects of man, and desire for the truth of a religion which promises remedies so precious.

The corruption of reason is shown by the number of differing and extravagant customs; it was necessary that truth should come in order that man should no longer live in himself.

Incomprehensible. — Not all that is incomprehensible is therefore non existent. Infinite number. An infinite space equal to a finite.

It is incredible that God should unite himself to us. — This consideration is drawn only from the view of our vileness. But if it be sincere, follow it as far as I have done, and recognise that we are in fact so vile as to make us by ourselves incapable of knowing whether his mercy may not render us capable of him. For I

would know how this animal, who is aware of his weakness, has the right to measure the mercy of God and set to it bounds suggested by his fancy. He knows so little what God is that he does not even know what himself is, and troubled with the view of his own state, boldly declares that God cannot render man capable of communion with him.

But I would ask if God demands aught else from him than to know him and to love him, and why, since man is by nature capable of love and knowledge, he believes that God cannot make himself known and loved by him. He certainly knows at least that he is, and that he loves something. Therefore if he see anything in his darkness, and if among the things of earth he find any subject of his love, why, if God impart to him some ray of his essence, should he not be capable of knowing and of loving him in the manner in which it shall please him to communicate himself to us? There must be then an intolerable arrogance in these sort of arguments, though they seem founded on apparent humility, which is neither sincere nor reasonable, unless it makes us confess that not knowing of ourselves what we are, we can learn it from God alone.

For myself, I declare that so soon as the Christian religion reveals the principle that human nature is corrupt and fallen from God, my eyes are opened to see everywhere the characters of this truth: for nature is such that she everywhere indicates, both within man and without him, a God whom he has lost and a corrupt nature.

Whatever may be said, it must be conceded that the Christian religion has something astonishing in it. Perhaps someone will say: “This is because you were born in it.” It may be: then I stiffen myself against it by this very reason, for fear this prejudice should bias me; but although I am born in it I cannot but find it so.

The whole course of things must have for its object the establishment and the grandeur of Religion: that there should be implanted in men sentiments

conformable to its precepts, and in a word, that it should be so completely the aim and the centre to which all things tend, that whoever understands its principles can give an explanation as of human nature in particular, so in general of the whole order of the world.

Our religion is wise and foolish. Wise, because it is the most learned, and the most founded on miracles, prophecies, etc. Foolish, because it is not all this which causes us to belong to it; this makes us indeed condemn those who are not of it, but is not the cause of belief in those who are. It is the cross that makes them believe, *ne evacuata sit crux*. And thus Saint Paul, who came with wisdom and signs, says that he came neither with wisdom nor with signs, for he came to convert. But those who come only to convince may say that they come with wisdom and with signs.

That religion, great as she is in miracles, with holy and blameless Fathers, learned and great witnesses, with martyrs and kings, as David, and Isaiah, a prince of the blood; great as she is in science, after having displayed all her miracles and all her wisdom, rejects it all, and says she has neither wisdom nor signs, but only the cross and foolishness.

For those, who by these signs and that wisdom have deserved your belief, and who have proved to you their character, declare to you that nothing of all this can change you, and render you capable of knowing and loving God, but the power of the foolishness of the cross without wisdom and signs, and not the signs without this power. Thus our Religion is foolish when we consider the effective cause, wise when we consider the wisdom which has prepared it.

How strange is Christianity! It enjoins man to acknowledge himself vile, even abominable, and enjoins him to aspire to be like God. Without such a counterpoise, this elevation would make him horribly vain, or that vileness would make him terribly abject

Misery counsels despair, pride counsels presumption.

The incarnation shows man the greatness of his misery by the greatness of the remedy of which he stood in need.

Not a vileness such as renders us incapable of good, nor a holiness exempt from evil.

No doctrine is more suited to man than this; for it teaches him his double capacity of receiving and losing grace, because of the double peril to which he is always exposed, of despair and of pride.

No other religion has enjoined hate of self. No other religion then can be pleasing to those who hate themselves, and who seek a Being wholly to be loved. And these, if they had never heard of the religion of an humiliated God, would embrace it at once.

No other has recognised that man is of all creatures the most excellent. Some, having apprehended the reality of his excellence, have blamed as mean and ungrateful the low opinion which men naturally have of themselves, and others, well aware how real is this vileness, have treated with haughty ridicule those sentiments of greatness which are no less natural to man.

“Lift your eyes to God,” say these, “see him in whose image you are, who has made you to worship him. You can make yourselves like unto him; wisdom will equal you to him if you will follow it.” But others say: “Bend your eyes to the earth, poor worm that you are, and look upon the brutes your comrades.” What then will man become? Will he equal God or the brutes? What an awful gulf! What then shall we be? Who does not see from all this that man has gone astray,

that he has fallen from his place, that he seeks it with disquiet, that he cannot regain it? And who shall direct him, since the greatest men have not availed?

What men could scarcely know by their greatest light, this Religion has taught to babes.

Other religions, as those of heathendom, are more popular since they consist only in externals, but they have no effect on the educated. A purely intellectual religion would be more adapted to the educated, but it would be of no use to the people. The Christian religion alone is fitted for all, being composed of externals and internals. It elevates the people to interior acts, it abases the proud to external rites, and it is not complete without both, for the people must understand the spirit which is in the letter, and the educated must submit their spirit to the letter.

Philosophers have consecrated vices in attributing them to God himself, Christians have consecrated virtues.

OF ORIGINAL SIN.



THERE ARE TWO truths of faith equally sure: the one, that man in the state of creation, or in that of grace, is raised above all nature, is made like unto God and is a sharer in divinity; the other, that in the state of corruption and sin, he has fallen from the higher state and is made like unto the beasts. These two propositions are equally firm and certain. The Scripture declares it plainly, as when it says in certain places: *Deliciæ meæ, esse cum filiis hominum. Effundam spiritum meum super omnem carnem. Dii estis, etc.*; and when it says in others: *Omnis caro fœnum. Homo comparatus est jumentis insipientibus, et similis factus est illis. Dixi in corde meo de filiis hominum, ut probaret eos Deus et ostenderet similes esse bestiis, etc.*

The wicked, who abandon themselves blindly to their passions, without the knowledge of God, and without taking the trouble to seek him, themselves confirm this foundation of the faith which they attack, that the nature of man is corrupt. And the Jews, who so obstinately assail the Christian religion, again confirm that other foundation of the same faith which they assail, namely, that Jesus Christ is the true Messiah, who has come to redeem men, and deliver them from the corruption and misery in which they were, as much by the condition in which we see them at this day, and which was foretold by the prophets, as by these same prophecies which they possess and keep so inviolably as the tokens whereby the Messiah is to be recognised.

I would ask them if it is not true that they themselves confirm this foundation of the faith they assail, which is that the nature of man is corrupt.

Marton sees indeed that nature is corrupt, and that men are opposed to honourable conduct, but he knows not why they cannot fly higher.

The meaning of the words *good* and *evil*.

Original sin is foolishness to men, but it is admitted to be so. This doctrine must not then be reproached with want of reason, since I admit that it has no reason. But this foolishness is wiser than all the wisdom of men, *sapientius est hominibus*. For without this how can we say what man is? His whole state depends on this imperceptible point, and how should it be perceived by his reason, since it is a thing against reason, and since reason, far from finding it out by her own ways, revolts from it when it is offered her?

There is nothing on earth which does not show either human misery or divine mercy; either the weakness of man without God, or the power of man with God.

Thus the whole universe teaches man, either that he is corrupt, or that he is redeemed; every thing teaches him his greatness or his misery; the abandonment by God is shown in the heathen, the protection of God is shown in the Jews.

Nature has her perfections to show that she is the image of God, and her defects to show that she is no more than his image.

Men being unaccustomed to form merit, but only to recompense it when they find it formed, judge of God by themselves.

When we wish to think of God, there is a something which turns us aside, and tempts us to think on other subjects; all this is evil and born with us.

Lust has become natural to us, and has made our second nature. Thus there are two natures in us, one good, the other evil. — Where is God? Where you are not,

and the kingdom of God is within you. — *The Rabbis*.

It is then true that everything instructs man concerning his condition, but the statement must be clearly understood, for it is not true that all reveals God, and it is not true that all hides him. But it is true both that he hides himself from those who tempt him, and that he reveals himself to those who seek him, because men are both unworthy and capable of God; unworthy by their corruption, capable by their original nature.

We cannot conceive the glorious state of Adam, nor the nature of his sin, nor the transmission of it to us. These things took place under the conditions of a nature quite different to our own, transcending our present capacity.

The knowledge of all this would be of no use in helping us to escape from it, and all we need know is that we are miserable, corrupt, separate from God, but ransomed by Jesus Christ, and of this we have on earth wonderful proofs.

Thus the two proofs of corruption and redemption are drawn from the wicked, who live indifferent to religion, and from the Jews who are its irreconcilable enemies.

All faith consists in Jesus Christ and in Adam, and all morality in lust and in grace.

Shall he only who knows his nature know it only to his misery? Shall he alone who knows it be alone miserable?

He must not see nothing whatever, nor must he see so much as to believe he possesses it, but he must see enough to know that he has lost it; for to be aware of loss he must see and not see, and that is precisely the state in which he is by nature.

We wish for truth, and find in ourselves only uncertainty.

We seek after happiness, and find only misery and death.

We cannot but wish for truth and happiness, and we are incapable neither of certainty nor of happiness. This desire is left to us, as much to punish us as to make us feel whence we are drawn.

Will it be asserted that because men have spoken of righteousness as having fled from the earth, therefore they knew of original sin? — *Nemo ante obitum beatus est.* — That therefore they knew death to be the beginning of eternal and essential happiness?

The dignity of man while innocent consisted in using and having dominion over the creatures, but now in separating himself from them, and subjecting himself to them.

Source of contradictions. — A God humbled, even to the death of the cross, a Messiah by his death triumphing over death. Two natures in Jesus Christ, two advents, two states of human nature.

Of original sin. — Ample tradition of original sin according to the Jews.

On the word in Genesis, viii. 21. The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth.

R. Moses Haddarschan: This evil leaven is placed in man from the time that he is formed.

Massechet Succa: This evil leaven has seven names in Scripture. It is called evil, an unclean prepuce, an enemy, a scandal, a heart of stone, the north wind; all this signifies the malignity which is concealed and ingrained in the heart of man.

Midrasch Tillim says the same thing, and that God will free the good nature of man from the evil.

This malignity is renewed every day against man, as it is written, Psalm xxxvii. The wicked watcheth the just, and striveth to kill him, but God will not abandon

him.

This malignity tries the heart of man in this life, and will accuse him in the other.

All this is found in the *Talmud*.

Midrasch Tillim on Ps. iv.: “Stand in awe and sin not.” Stand in awe and be afraid of your lust, and it will not lead you into sin. And on Ps. xxxvi. “The wicked has said in his heart: Let not the fear of God be before me.” That is to say that the malignity natural to man has said that to the wicked.

Misdrasch el Kohelet: “Better is a poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king who cannot foresee the future.” The child is virtue, and the king is the malignity of man. It is called king because all the members obey it, and old because it is in the heart of man from infancy to old age, and foolish because it leads man in the way of perdition which he does not foresee.

The same thing is in *Misdrasch Tillim*.

Bereschist Rabba on Ps. xxxv.: “Lord, all my bones shall bless thee, who deliverest the poor from the tyrant.” And is there a greater tyrant than the evil leaven? And on Proverbs xxv., “If thine enemy be hungry, feed him.” That is to say, if the evil leaven hunger, give him the bread of wisdom of which speaks Prov. ix., and if he be thirsty, give him the water of which speaks Isaiah lv.

Misdrasch Tillim says the same thing, and that the Scripture in that passage speaking of our enemy, means the evil leaven, and that in giving it that bread and that water, we heap coals of fire on his head.

Misdrasch Kohelet on Ecclesiastes ix. “A great king besieged a little city.” This great king is the evil leaven, the great engines with which he surrounds it are temptations, and there has been found a poor wise man who has delivered it, that is to say virtue.

And on Ps. xli. “Blessed is he that considereth the poor.”

And on Ps. lxxviii. The spirit goeth and returneth not again, whereof some have taken occasion of error concerning the immortality of the soul; but the sense

is that this spirit is the evil leaven, which accompanies man till death, and will not return at the resurrection.

And on Ps. ciii. the same thing.

And on Ps. xvi.

Chronology of Rabbinism.

The citations of pages are from the book *Pugio*.

Page 27, R. Hakadosch, *anno* 200, author of the Mischna or vocal law, or second law.

Commentaries on the Mischna, *anno* 340:

The one, *Siphra*.
Barajetot.
Talmud Hierosol.
Tosiphtot.

Bereschit Rabah, by R. Osaiah Rabah, commentary on the Mischna.

Bereschit Rabah, Bar Naconi, are subtle and agreeable discourses, historical and theological. The same author wrote the books called Rabot.

A hundred years after the *Talmud Hierosol*. *anno* 440, was made the *Babylonian Talmud*, by R. Ase, by the universal consent of all the Jews, who are necessarily obliged to observe all that is contained therein.

The addition of R. Ase is called the *Gemara*, that is to say the commentary on the *Mischna*.

And the *Talmud* as a whole comprises the *Mischna* and the *Gemara*.

THE PERPETUITY OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.



Perpetuity. — That religion has always existed on earth, which consists in believing that man has fallen from a state of glory and of communion with God into a state of sorrow, penitence, and estrangement from God, but that after this life we shall be restored by a Messiah who was to come. All things have passed away, and this has subsisted for which are all things.

Men in the first age of the world were carried away into every kind of misconduct, and yet there were holy men, as Enoch, Lamech and others, who awaited with patience the Christ promised from the beginning of the world. Noah saw the evil of men at its height; and he was found worthy to save the world in his person, by the hope of the Messiah of whom he was the type. Abraham was compassed round about by idolaters, when God revealed to him the mystery of the Messiah, whom he greeted from afar. In the days of Isaac and Jacob abomination was spread over the whole earth, but these holy men lived in faith, and Jacob dying and blessing his children, cried in a transport which made him break off his discourse, "I await, O my God, the Saviour whom thou hast promised. *Salutare tuum expectabo, Domine*." The Egyptians were infected both with idolatry and magic, even the people of God were led astray by their example. Yet Moses and others saw him whom they saw not, and adored him, looking to the eternal gifts which he was preparing for them. The Greeks and Latins then enthroned false deities, the poets made a hundred divers theologies, the philosophers separated into a thousand different sects, and yet in the heart of Judæa were always chosen men who foretold the advent of this Messiah, known to them alone. He came at length in the fulness of time, and since then, notwithstanding the birth of so many schisms and heresies, so many revolutions in government, such great changes in all things, this Church, adoring him who has

ever been adored, has subsisted without a break. It is a wonderful, incomparable and wholly divine fact, that this Religion which has ever endured, has ever been assailed. A thousand times has it been on the eve of an universal ruin, and whenever it has been in that state God has restored it by extraordinary manifestations of his power. This is marvellous, so also that it has survived without yielding to the will of tyrants. For it is not strange that a State subsists when its laws sometimes give way to necessity, but that....

States would perish if they did not often make their laws bend to necessity, but Religion has never suffered this or practised it. And indeed there must be either compromise or miracles. There is nothing unusual in being saved by yielding, and strictly speaking this is not endurance, besides in the end they perish utterly: there is none which has endured a thousand years. But that this Religion, although inflexible, should always have been maintained, shows that it is divine.

The religion which alone is contrary to our nature, to common sense, and to our pleasures, is that alone which has always existed.

The science which alone is contrary to common sense and human nature, is that alone which has always subsisted among men.

To show that the true Jews and the true Christians have one and the same Religion. — The religion of the Jews seemed to consist essentially in the fatherhood of Abraham, in circumcision, sacrifices and ceremonies, in the ark, in the temple at Jerusalem, and lastly, in the Law, and the Covenant with Moses.

I say that it consisted in none of these, but solely in the love of God, and that all else was rejected by him;

That God did not accept the posterity of Abraham;

That the Jews if they transgressed were to be punished like strangers. Deut. viii. 19. “If thou at all forget the Lord thy God, and walk after other gods, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish as the nations which God has destroyed before you.”

That strangers if they loved God were to be received by him as the Jews. Isaiah lvi. 3. “Let not the stranger say, The Lord will not receive me. — The strangers that join themselves unto the Lord God to serve him and love him, will I bring unto my holy mountain, and accept their sacrifices, for mine house is an house of prayer.”

That the true Jews ascribed all their merit to God, and not to Abraham. Isaiah lxiii. 16. “Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not. Thou art our Father and our Redeemer.”

Moses himself said that God would not accept the person of any.

Deut. x. 17. “God,” said he, “accepteth neither persons nor sacrifices.”

That the circumcision commanded was that of the heart. Deut. x. 16; Jeremiah iv. 4. “Be ye circumcised in heart. Cut off the superfluities of your heart, harden not your hearts, for your God is a great God, strong and terrible, who accepteth not the person of any.”

That God said he would one day do it. Deut. xxx. 6. “God will circumcise thine heart, and thy children’s heart, that thou mayest love him with all thine heart.”

That the uncircumcised in heart should be judged.

Jer. ix. 26. For God will judge the uncircumcised peoples, and all the people of Israel, because he is uncircumcised in heart.

That the exterior is nothing in comparison of the interior. Joel. ii. 13. *Scindite corda vestra*, etc. Isaiah lviii. 3,4, etc.

The love of God is commanded in the whole of Deuteronomy, Deut. xxx. 19: “I call heaven and earth to witness that I have set before you death and life, that you may choose life, and that you may love God, and obey him, for God is your life.”

That the Jews, for lack of their love, should be rejected for their crimes, and the Gentiles chosen in their stead.

Hosea i. 10.

Deut. xxxii. 20. “I will hide myself from them in view of their latter sins, for they are a froward generation. They have provoked me to anger by things which are no gods, and I will provoke them to jealousy by a people which is not my people, by an ignorant and foolish nation.”

Isaiah lxv. 1. That temporal goods are false, and that the true good is to be united to God.

Psalm cxliii. 15. That their feasts were displeasing to God.

Amos v. 21. That the sacrifices of the Jews were displeasing to God.

Isa. lxvi. 1-3; l. 11; Jerem. vi. 20.

David, *Miserere*. Even on the part of the good, *Expectavi*.

Psalm xlix. 8-14. That he has established them only for their hardness. Micah, admirably, vi. 6-8.

I. Kings xv. 22; Hosea vi. 6.

That the sacrifices of the Gentiles should be accepted of God, and that God would none of the sacrifices of the Jews. Malachi i. 11.

That God would make a new covenant with the Messiah, and that the Old should be disannulled. Jer. xxxi. 31.

Mandata non bona. Ezek. xx. 25.

That the old things should be forgotten. Isa. xliii. 18, 19; lxv. 17, 18.

That the ark should come no more to mind. Jer. iii. 15, 16.

That the temple should be rejected. Jer. vii. 12-14.

That the sacrifices should be rejected, and purer sacrifices established. Malachi i. 11.

That the order of Aaron’s priesthood should be rejected and that of Melchizedek introduced by the Messiah. *Dixit Dominus.*

That this sacrifice should be eternal. *Ib.*

That Jerusalem should be rejected, and Rome admitted.

That the name of the Jews should be rejected and a new name given. Isa. lxv. 15.

That this new name should be more excellent than that of the Jews, and eternal. Isa. lvii. 5.

That the Jews should be without prophets, Amos, without a king, without princes, without sacrifice, without an idol.

That the Jews should nevertheless always remain a people. Jer. xxxi. 36.

Perpetuity. — Men have always believed in a Messiah. The tradition from Adam was still fresh in Noah and in Moses. After these the prophets bore witness, at the same time foretelling other things which being from time to time fulfilled in the eyes of all, demonstrated the truth of their mission, and consequently that of their promises touching the Messiah. Jesus Christ worked miracles, and the Apostles also, who converted all the Gentiles; and the prophecies being thus once accomplished, the Messiah is for ever proved.

... On that account I reject all other religions.

In that I find an answer to all objections.

It is just that a God so pure should only disclose himself to those whose hearts are purified.

Therefore that religion is lovable to me, and I find it sufficiently authorized by so divine a morality, but I find yet more....

I find it a convincing fact that since the memory of man has lasted, it was constantly declared to men that they were universally corrupt, and that a Redeemer should come;

That it was not one man who said it, but an infinity of men, and a whole nation lasting for four thousand years, prophesying, and created for that very purpose.... So I stretch out my arms to my Redeemer, who having been foretold for four

thousand years, has come to suffer and to die for me on earth at the time and under all the circumstances which had been foretold, and by his grace I await death in peace, in the hope of being eternally united to him; yet I live with joy, whether in the good which it pleases him to bestow on me, or in the ill which he sends for my good, and which he has taught me to bear by his example.

The Synagogue preceded the Church, the Jews preceded the Christians, the prophets foretold the Christians, Saint John foretold Jesus Christ.

No religion but our own has taught that man is born in sin; no sect of philosophers ever said this, therefore none has said the truth.

No sect or religion has always existed on earth, except the Christian religion.

The Christian religion is that alone which renders man lovable and happy at once. Living in the world he cannot be lovable and happy at the same time.

In all times either men have spoken of the true God, or the true God has spoken to men.

There are two foundations, one interior and the other exterior, grace and miracles, and both are supernatural.

PROOFS OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.



Proofs of Religion.

Morals — Doctrine — Miracles — Prophecies — Figures.

Proof — 1. The Christian religion having established itself so strongly, yet so quietly, whilst contrary to nature. — 2. The sanctity, the dignity, and the humility of a Christian soul. — 3. The wonders of holy Scripture. — 4. Jesus Christ in particular. — 5. The apostles in particular. — 6. Moses and the prophets in particular. — 7. The Jewish people. — 8. The Prophecies. — 9. Perpetuity. No religion has perpetuity. — 10. The Doctrine, which explains all. — 11. The sanctity of this law. — 12. By the course of the world.

It is beyond doubt that after considering what is life and what is religion we cannot refuse to act on the inclination to follow it, if it comes into our heart, and it is certain there is no ground for jeering at those who follow it.

The general conduct of the world towards the Church. — God willing both to blind and enlighten. — The event having proved that these prophecies were divine, the remainder ought to be believed, and hence we see that the order of the world is on this manner.

The miracles of the creation and the deluge being forgotten, God sent the law and the miracles of Moses, the prophets who prophesied particular things, and to prepare an abiding miracle he prepares prophecies and their fulfilment. But as the prophecies might be suspected he wishes to make them beyond suspicion, etc.

... But even those who seem most opposed to the glory of religion are not in that respect useless for others. We draw from them the first argument, that here is

something supernatural, for a blindness of that kind is not natural, and if their folly renders them so opposed to their own good, it will serve to guarantee others against it, by the horror of an example so deplorable, and a folly so worthy of compassion.

... Men revile what they do not understand. The Christian religion consists in two points. It is of equal moment to men to know them both, and equally dangerous to ignore either. And it is equally of God's mercy that he has given marks of both.

Yet they take occasion to conclude that one of these points does not exist from that which is intended to make them certain of the other. Those sages who have said there is a God have been persecuted, the Jews were hated, and still more the Christians. They saw by the light of nature, that if there be a true religion on earth, the course of all things must tend to it as to a centre. And on this ground they venture to revile the Christian religion because they misunderstand it. They imagine that it consists simply in the adoration of a God conceived as great, powerful and eternal; which is in fact deism, almost as far removed from the Christian religion as atheism, its exact opposite. And hence they infer the falsehood of our religion, because they do not see that all things concur to the establishment of this point, that God does not manifest himself to man with all the evidence which is possible.

But let them conclude what they will against deism, they can conclude nothing on that account against the Christian religion, which properly consists in the mystery of the Redeemer, who, uniting in himself the two natures human and divine, has withdrawn men from the corruption of sin that he might in his divine person reconcile them to God.

True religion then teaches these two truths to men, that there is a God whom they are capable of knowing, and that there is such corruption in their nature as to render them unworthy of him. It is of equal importance to men that they should apprehend the one and the other of these points, and it is alike dangerous for man

to know God without the knowledge of his own worthlessness, and to know his own worthlessness without the knowledge of the Redeemer who may deliver him from it. To apprehend the one without the other begets either the pride of philosophers, who knew God, but not their own wretchedness; or the despair of atheists, who know their own wretchedness, but not the Redeemer. And as it is alike necessary for man to know these two points, so it is alike of the mercy of God to have given us the knowledge. The Christian religion does this; it is in this that it consists. Let us herein examine the order of the world, and see if all things do not tend to establish these two main points of our Religion.

It is a remarkable fact that no canonical writer has ever employed nature to prove God. All tend to make him be believed. David, Solomon and others have never said: “There is no vacuum, therefore there is a God.” They must have been cleverer than the cleverest in after days who have all used this argument.

This is well worth considering.

If it be a mark of weakness to prove God by nature, despise not the Scripture for not doing so: if it be a mark of power to know these contradictions, value the Scriptures on that account.

What! Do you not say yourself that the sky and the birds prove God? — No. — And does not your religion say so? — No. For however it may be true in a sense for some souls to whom God has given this light, it is nevertheless false in regard to the majority.

Think you it is impossible that God is infinite, without parts? — Yes. — I will then make you see something which is infinite and indivisible. A point moving everywhere with infinite swiftness, for it is in all places, and is whole and entire in each situation.

Perhaps this effect of nature, which seems to you impossible beforehand, may teach you to know that there may be others also which you know not as yet. Do not then draw this conclusion from your apprenticeship, that nothing remains for you to know, but rather that an infinity remains for you to know.

It is incomprehensible that there should be a God, and incomprehensible that there should not be; that there should be a soul in the body, and that we should have no soul; that the world should have been created, and that it should not, etc.; that original sin should be, and that it should not be.

If we choose to say that man is too little to merit communion with God, we must be indeed great to form a judgment on the subject.

The Eternal is for ever, if he is at all.

But it is impossible that God should ever be the end, if he is not the beginning. We look above, but lean upon the sand, and the earth will melt, and we shall fall whilst looking towards heaven.

Objection. The Scripture is plainly full of matters which were not dictated by the Holy Spirit.

Answer. Then they do no harm to faith.

Objection. But the Church has decided that all is of the Holy Spirit.

Answer. I answer two things: 1. That the Church has never so decided; 2. That if she should so decide it might be maintained.

My God! what trash is all this talk: “Has God made the world but to condemn it? will he ask so much of creatures so weak?” etc. Scepticism is the remedy for this evil, and will lower this vanity.

God has willed to redeem mankind and to open salvation to those who seek him. But men render themselves so unworthy of it, that it is just that God should refuse to some because of their hardness of heart what he grants to others out of a mercy not their due. Had it been his will to overcome the stubbornness of the most hardened, he could have rendered them unable to doubt the truth of his essence, in revealing himself manifestly to them as he will appear at the last day, amid thunderings and lightnings, and so great a convulsion of nature, that the dead will rise again, and the blindest shall see him.

Not thus willed he to appear in his gentle advent, because since so many men make themselves unworthy of his mercy, he willed to leave them deprived of the good which they refuse. It had not then been just that he should appear in a manner plainly divine, and wholly capable of convincing all men, but neither had it been just that he should come in so hidden a manner as not to be recognised of those who sincerely sought him. He has willed to reveal himself wholly to these, and thus willing to appear openly to those who seek him with their whole heart, and to hide himself from those who fly him with all their heart, he has so tempered the knowledge of himself as to give signs of himself visible to those who seek him, and obscure to those who seek him not.

There is enough light for those who wish earnestly to see, and enough obscurity for those of a contrary mind.

Therefore let men recognise the truth of religion in the very obscurity of religion, in the little light we have of it, and in our indifference to the knowledge of it.

The prophecies, the very miracles and proofs of our Religion, are not of such a nature that we can say they are absolutely convincing. But they are also of such a kind, that none can say that it is unreasonable to believe in them. Thus there is both evidence and obscurity to enlighten some and blind others; but the evidence

is such that it surpasses or at least equals the evidence to the contrary, so that it is not reason which can determine us not to follow it, and therefore it can only be lust and malice of heart. And by this means there is evidence enough to condemn, and not enough to convince; so it appears in those who follow it, that it is grace and not reason which causes them to follow it; and in those who fly it, it is lust, not reason, which causes them to fly it.

Who can help admiring and embracing a religion which thoroughly knows that which we recognise more and more in proportion to our light?

That God has willed to hide himself. — If there were only one Religion God would certainly be manifest; so also if there were no martyrs but in our own Religion.

God being thus hidden, every religion which does not say that God is hidden is not the true religion, and every religion which does not show the reason of it is unedifying. Our religion does all this: *Vere tu es Deus absconditus*.

Religion is so great a thing, that it is right that those who will not take the trouble to seek if it be obscure should be deprived of it. Why then should any complain, if it be such as to be found by seeking?

The obscurity would be too great, if truth had not visible signs. This is a marvellous one, that it has always been preserved in a Church and a visible assembly. The clearness would be too great if there were only one opinion in this Church, but to recognise what is true is only to see what has always existed, for it is certain that truth has always existed, and that nothing false has been always in existence.

Recognise then the truth of religion even in the obscurity of religion, in the little light we have of it, and in the indifference we have to its knowledge.

God chooses rather to sway the will than the intellect. Perfect clearness would be useful to the intellect but would harm the will. To humble pride.

Were there no obscurity man would not be sensible of his corruption; were there no light man would despair of remedy. Thus it is not only just, but useful for us, that God should be partly hidden and partly revealed, because it is equally dangerous for man to know God without the knowledge of his misery, and to know his misery without the knowledge of God.

If the mercy of God is so great that his teaching is salutary even when he hides himself, what great light may we not expect when he reveals himself?

We shall understand nothing of the works of God if we do not take it as a principle that he has willed to blind some and enlighten others.

What say the prophets of Jesus Christ? That he will be manifestly God? No: but that he is a God truly hidden, that he will be misunderstood; that none would think it was he; that he would be a stone of stumbling on which many would fall, etc. Let us no longer then be reproached with want of clearness, since we make profession of it.

But, it is said, there are obscurities. — And without that, no one would have stumbled at Jesus Christ, which is one of the formal announcements of the prophets: *Excæca*....

Instead of complaining that God is hidden, you will give him thanks for having revealed so much of himself; and you will give him thanks again for not having revealed himself to the proudly wise, who are unworthy to know so holy a God.

Two sorts of persons know: those whose heart is humble, and who love lowliness, whatever their order of intellect, whether high or low, and those who

have understanding enough to see the truth, whatever opposition they may feel to it.

I may well love total darkness, but if God keep me in a state of semi-obscurity, this partial darkness is unpleasant to me, and because I do not see in it the advantages of total darkness it pleases me not. This is a fault, and a proof that I am making an idol of darkness apart from God's order. Now his order alone is to be worshipped.

Did the world exist to instruct man concerning God, his divinity would shine out incontestably from every part of it, but as it exists only by Jesus Christ, and for Jesus Christ, and to instruct men concerning their corruption and their redemption, proofs of these two truths start up everywhere.

What is seen does not denote either the total exclusion or the manifest presence of divinity, but the presence of a God who hides himself. All bears this character.

Had nought of God ever appeared, this eternal deprivation would have been equivocal, and might as well be interpreted of the total absence of divinity, as of man's unworthiness to know him; but by occasional and not continual appearances he has taken away all ambiguity. If he have appeared once, he is for ever, and thus it must be concluded both that there is a God, and that men are unworthy of him.

God, that he may reserve to himself alone the right to instruct us and that he may render the difficulty of our being unintelligible to us, has hidden the knot so high, or rather so low, that we cannot reach it. So that it is not by the efforts of our reason, but by the simple submission of our reason, that we can truly know ourselves.

Wisdom sends us to childhood: *nisi efficiamini sicut parvuli*.

“A miracle,” says one, “would strengthen my faith.” He says so when he does not see one. Reasons seen from afar seem to limit our view, but as we reach them we begin to see beyond. Nothing stops the activity of our spirit. There is no rule, we say, which has not its exception, no truth so general but that there is a side on which it is lacking. If it be not absolutely universal, we have a pretext for applying the exception to the matter in hand, and for saying: *This is not always true, hence there are cases in which it is not so. It only remains to show that this is one of them.* And we must be very awkward or unlucky if we do not find one some day.

Contradictions.

Infinite wisdom and wisdom of Religion.

Contradiction is a bad mark of truth.

Much that is certain is contradicted.

Much that is false passes without contradiction.

Contradiction is not a mark of falsehood, nor the want of contradiction a mark of truth.

There is a pleasure in being in a vessel beaten about by a storm, provided we are certain it will not founder. The persecutions which try the Church are of this kind.

The history of the Church should rightly be called the history of truth.

Those who find difficulties of belief seek an excuse in the unbelief of the Jews. “If it was so clear,” say they, “why did not the Jews believe?” And they almost wish the Jews had believed, that they might not be deterred by the example of their refusal. But their very unbelief is the foundation of our faith. We should be much less disposed to believe if they were on our side. We should then have a far

more ample pretext. This is the wonderful point, to have made the Jews great lovers of the things foretold, and great enemies of their accomplishment.

What could the Jews, his enemies, do? Receiving him they give proof of him by that reception, for then the Messiah is acknowledged by those to whom was committed the expectation of his coming; rejecting him they prove his truth by that rejection.

On the fact that the Christian Religion does not stand alone. — This is so far from being a reason against believing it the true one that, on the contrary, it proves it to be so.

Those who love not the truth take as a pretext that it is contested, and that a multitude deny it; and thus their error comes from this alone, that they love neither truth nor charity. So they are without excuse.

The wicked who profess to follow reason, ought to be extremely strong in reason.

What then do they say?

Do we not see, say they, beasts live and die like men, and Turks like Christians? They have their ceremonies, their prophets, their doctors, their saints, their religious, as well as we, etc. *But how is this contrary to the Scripture? Does it not say all this?*

If you care but little to know the truth, here is enough for your peace. But if you desire to know it with your whole heart, this is not enough, look to the details. This would suffice for a question in philosophy, but not here, where your all is concerned. And yet, after a slight meditation of this kind, we shall go off to amuse ourselves, etc. We should acquaint ourselves with this religion; even if it does not disclose the reason for such obscurity, it will perhaps teach it to us.

If God had permitted one only Religion, it would have been too easily recognised. But when we look at it near we can easily see the true through the confusion.

PROOFS OF THE DIVINITY OF JESUS CHRIST.



Perpetuity. — Let it be considered that from the beginning of the world the expectation or the worship of the Messiah has subsisted without a break; that there have been men who said that God had revealed to them the future birth of a Redeemer who should save his people; that afterwards came Abraham saying he had had a revelation that the Messiah was to spring from him by a son who should be born; that Jacob declared that of his twelve sons the Messiah would spring from Judah; that Moses and the prophets then came to declare the time and the manner of his advent; that they said their law was only provisional till that of the Messiah, that it should last till then but the other should endure eternally; that thus either their law or that of the Messiah, of which it was the promise, would be always upon earth; that in fact it has always endured; that at last Jesus Christ has come with all the circumstances foretold. How wonderful is this!

The two most ancient books in the world are those of Moses and Job, the one a Jew, the other a Gentile, both of whom regard Jesus Christ as their common centre and object: Moses in reporting the promises of God to Abraham, Jacob, etc., and his prophecies. And Job, *Quis mihi det ut, etc. Scio enim quod redemptor meus vivit, etc.*

I believe that Joshua was the first of God's people who had this name, as Jesus Christ was the last of God's people.

What man had ever so great renown! The whole Jewish people foretold him before his coming. The Gentile world worships him after his coming. The two worlds, Gentile and Jewish, regard him as their centre.

Yet what man ever had less enjoyment of his renown! Of thirty-three years he spent thirty in retirement. For three years he passed as an impostor, the priests and rulers rejected him, his friends and kinsmen despised him. At the end he died, betrayed by one of his own disciples, denied by another, abandoned by all.

What part then had he in all this renown? Never man had more glory, never man more ignominy. All this renown was for our sakes, to enable us to recognise him, he took none of it for himself.

Office of Jesus Christ. — He alone was to produce a great people, elect, holy, and chosen, to lead it, to nourish it, to bring it into a place of rest and holiness, to make it holy to God, to make it the temple of God, to reconcile it to God, to save it from the wrath of God, to deliver it from the slavery of sin, which visibly reigns in man, to give laws to this people, to engrave these laws on their heart, to offer himself to God for them, to sacrifice himself for them, to be a victim without spot, himself the priest, needing to offer himself, his body and his blood, and yet to offer bread and wine to God....

After many persons had come before, at last came Jesus Christ, to say: “Here am I and this is the hour, that which the prophets had said was to come in the fulness of time. I tell you what my apostles will do. The Jews shall be cast out, Jerusalem shall be soon destroyed, and the Gentiles shall enter into the knowledge of God. My apostles shall do this after you have slain the heir of the vineyard.”

Then the Apostles said to the Jews, “You shall be accursed,” and to the Gentiles, “You shall enter into the knowledge of God;” and that came to pass. *Celsus laughed at it.*

Then Jesus Christ came to tell men that they had no enemies but themselves, that their passions cut them off from God, that he came to destroy these, and give them his grace to unite them all in an holy Church, that he came to call into this Church Gentiles and Jews, that he came to destroy the idols of the former and the

superstition of the latter. To this all men are opposed, not only by the natural opposition of lust; but above all, the kings of the earth, as had been foretold, gathered together to destroy this religion in its infancy. *Quare fremuerunt gentes. Reges terræ adversus Christum.*

All that was great on earth was united together, the learned, the wise, the kings. The first wrote, the second condemned, the last slew. Yet notwithstanding all these oppositions, these men, so simple and so weak, resisted all these forces, subduing even the mighty, the learned and the wise, and removed idolatry from all the earth. And all this was done by the power which had foretold it

And prediction crowns all this, so that none may say that chance has done it all.

Whosoever having only a week to live, does not perceive that belief is the right side to take, and that all this is not a stroke of chance....

Now were we not slaves to passion, a week and a hundred years would seem one and the same thing.

The prophets foretold, and were not foretold. The saints were foretold, but were not foretellers. Jesus Christ was foretold and foreteller.

If I had never heard anything of the Messiah, yet after the admirable predictions of the course of the world which I see accomplished, I see that it is divine. And if I knew that these same books foretold a Messiah, I should be certain that he would come. And seeing that they place his time before the destruction of the second temple, I should say that he had come.

Ingrediens mundum.

Stone upon stone.

That which preceded, that which followed. All the Jews still exist, and are wanderers.

Why did not Jesus Christ come in a visible manner, instead of drawing proof from the prophecies which went before him?

And why did he cause himself to be foretold in figures?

God, to enable the Messiah to be recognised by the good and unrecognised by the wicked, caused him to be so foretold. If the manner of the Messiah had been clearly foretold there had been no obscurity, even for the wicked. If the time had been obscurely foretold, there had been obscurity even for the good, for their goodness of heart would not have made them understand, for instance, that the closed *mem* means six hundred years. But the time has been foretold clearly and the manner in figures only.

By this means the wicked, mistaking the promised for material blessings, have gone astray, in spite of clear indications of the time, and the good have not gone astray; for the interpretation of the promised blessings depends on the heart, wont to call that *good* which it loves, but the interpretation of the promised time does not depend on the heart. Thus the clear prediction of the time, and the obscure intimation of the blessings, deceives only the wicked.

If Jesus Christ had come only for sanctification, the whole of Scripture and all things would tend to this end, and it would be easy to convince unbelievers. If Jesus Christ had come only to blind, all his conduct would be confused, and we should have no means of convincing unbelievers. But as he came *in sanctificationem et in scandalum*, as says Isaiah, we cannot convince unbelievers, and they cannot convince us; but by that very fact we overcome them because we say that there is nothing in his conduct conclusive on one side or the other.

Jesus Christ has come to blind those who saw clearly, and to give sight to the blind; to heal the sick and let the sound perish; to call sinners to repentance and

justification, and leave the just in their sins; to fill the hungry with good things and to send the rich empty away.

We can have nothing but veneration for a man who clearly foretells events which take place, and who declares his design both to blind and to enlighten, and who mixes obscurities among the clear things which happen.

During the life of the Messiah. — Ænigmatis. — Ezek. xvii. — His forerunner. Malachi ii.

He will be born an infant. Is. ix. 6.

He will be born at Bethlehem. Micah v. He will appear chiefly in Jerusalem, and will spring from the family of Judah and of David.

He will blind the learned and the wise, Is. vi 8, 29, and preach the Gospel to the poor and the lowly, will open the eyes of the blind, restore health to the sick, and bring light to those who languish in darkness. Is. lxi.

He must show the perfect way, and be the teacher of the Gentiles. Is. lv.

The prophecies must be unintelligible to the wicked, Dan. xii., Hos. xiv. 10, but intelligible to those who are well instructed.

He must be the precious corner stone. Is. xxviii. 16.

He must be the stone of stumbling and offence. Is. viii.

Jerusalem must dash against this stone.

The builders must reject this stone. Ps. cxvii. 22.

God will make of this stone the head of the corner.

And this stone will grow into a mountain, and fill the whole earth. Dan. ii.

Thus he must be rejected, disowned, betrayed, sold, Zach. xi. 12, spit upon, buffeted, mocked, afflicted in a thousand ways, be given gall to drink, Ps. lxviii., pierced, Zach. xii., his feet and his hands pierced, killed, and lots cast upon his vesture.

He must rise again, Ps. xv., the third day. Hos. vi. 3.

He must ascend to heaven to sit on the right hand. Ps. cx.

The kings will arm themselves against him. Ps. ii.

Being on the right hand of the Father, he will have victory over all his enemies.

The kings of the earth, and all nations shall worship him. Is. lx.

The Jews will remain as a nation. Jer.

They will be dispersed, without kings, etc., Hos. iii; without prophets. Amos;

Waiting for salvation and finding it not. Is.

The calling of the Gentiles by Jesus Christ. Is. lii., Ps. lxxi.

The Jews in slaying him that they might not receive the Messiah, stamped him with the final proof of his Messiahship.

And by continuance in denial, they made themselves unimpeachable witnesses; and in slaying him, and continuing to reject him, they have fulfilled the prophecies.

The word *Galilee*, which the Jewish rabble pronounced as if by chance, in their accusation of Jesus Christ before Pilate, gave Pilate a reason for sending Jesus Christ to Herod, so that the mystery was accomplished, that he should be judged by Jews and Gentiles. Chance was apparently the cause that the mystery was accomplished.

The conversion of the Gentiles was only reserved for the grace of the Messiah. The Jews so long opposed them without success; all that Solomon and the prophets had said was useless. Wise men like Plato and Socrates could not persuade them.

If this was so clearly foretold to the Jews, why did they not believe it, or why were they not exterminated for resisting what was so clear?

I answer first: it was foretold both that they would not believe what was so clear, and that they would not be exterminated. And nothing is more glorious to

the Messiah, for it is not enough that there should be prophets, they must be kept above suspicion. Now, etc.

Had the Jews been all converted by Jesus Christ, we should have none but doubtful witnesses, and had they been entirely destroyed we should have had no witnesses at all.

The Jews rejected him, but not all. The saints receive him, but not carnal men. Yet this is far from being against his glory, it is the last stroke which perfects it. The argument on their side, the only one which is found in the Talmud and the rabbinical writings, is that Jesus Christ has not subdued the nations sword in hand, *gladium tuum, potentissime*. Is this all they can allege? Jesus Christ has been slain, they say, he was subdued, he has not had dominion over the heathen by his power, he has not distributed the spoil among us, he does not give riches. Is this all they have to allege? This is the very point wherein he seems to me so lovable. I would none of such an one as they represent. It is plain that his life only hinders them from receiving him, by their refusal they become irreproachable witnesses, and what is more, they thereby fulfil the prophecies.

There are those who see clearly that man has no other enemy than lust, which turns him from God, and not God, and that there is no other good but God, not a fat land. Let those who believe that the good of man is in the flesh, and evil that which turns him away from sensual pleasures, besot themselves with them and die in them. But those who seek God with their whole heart, whose only ill is not to see him, whose only desire is to possess him, whose only enemies are those who would turn them from him, who are afflicted when they are surrounded and overwhelmed by such enemies, may take comfort, for I declare to them this joyful news: there is for them a Redeemer, whom I will show them; I will show them that there is for them a God, and I will not show him to others. I will show them

that a Messiah has been promised, who will deliver them from their enemies, and that one has come to deliver them from their iniquities, not from their enemies.

It is a wonderful thing, and worthy of all attention, to see the Jewish nation existing so many years in constant misery, it being necessary as a proof of Jesus Christ, both that they should exist to be his witnesses, and should be miserable because they crucified him, and though to be miserable and to exist, are contradictory, this nation still exists in spite of its misery.

When Nebuchadnezzar carried away the people, for fear they should believe that the sceptre had departed from Judah, they were assured beforehand that they would be but a short time in captivity, and would be restored.

They were never without the comfort of their prophets, or the presence of their kings. But the second destruction is without promise of restoration, without prophets, without kings, without comfort, without hope, for the sceptre is taken away for ever.

Proofs of Jesus Christ. — To have been captive with the assurance of deliverance in seventy years was no true captivity. But now they are captives without hope.

God has promised them that even though he should disperse them to the ends of the earth, nevertheless if they were faithful to the law he would gather them together. They are now very faithful to it, yet remain oppressed.

Blindness of Scripture. — The Scripture, say the Jews, says that we know not whence Christ should come.

John vii. 27 and xii 34.

The Scripture says that Christ abideth for ever, and he said that he should die. Therefore, says Saint John, they believed him not, though he had done so many miracles, that the word of Isaiah might be fulfilled: *He hath blinded them, etc.*

Contradictions. — The sceptre until Messiah come. Without king or prince.
The eternal law, changed.
The eternal covenant, a new covenant.
The good law, evil precepts, Ezekiel xx.

Apparent discord of the Evangelists.

Proofs of Jesus Christ.
Why the book of Ruth was preserved.
Why the story of Tamar.

The genealogy of Jesus Christ in the Old Testament is intermixed with so many that are useless, that it cannot be distinguished. If Moses had kept only the register of the ancestors of Jesus Christ, that had been too plain. If he had not marked that of Jesus Christ, it had not been plain enough. But after all, whoso looks closely sees that of Jesus Christ distinctly traced through Tamar, Ruth, etc.

Jesus Christ in an obscurity — as the world calls obscurity — so great, that the historians who wrote only the important matters of States hardly perceived him.

On the fact that neither Josephus, nor Tacitus, nor other historians, have spoken of Jesus Christ. — So far from this being any argument against, it is rather one for us. For it is certain that Jesus Christ has existed, that his religion has made a great noise, and that these people were not ignorant of it; thus it is plain that they designedly concealed it, or perhaps that they did speak of it, and what they said has been suppressed or altered.

When Augustus learnt that Herod's own son was among the children under the age of two years whom he had commanded to be slain, he said that it was better to

be Herod's pig than his son. Macrob. *Saturn*. Lib. ii., c. 4.

Macrobius, on the Innocents slain by Herod.

Prophecies. — Great Pan is dead.

Herod believed to be the Messiah. He had taken away the sceptre of Judah, but he was not of Judah. This was held by a considerable sect.

Both Barcoseba and another received by the Jews. And the rumour which was everywhere in those times. Suetonius, Tacitus, Josephus.

In what sort should Messiah come, seeing that by him the sceptre should be eternally in Judah, and at his coming the sceptre should depart from Judah?

To the end that seeing they should not see, and understanding they should not understand, nothing could be better done.

Curse of the Greeks against those who count periods of time.

Proofs of Jesus Christ. — Jesus Christ said great things so simply that he seems not to have considered them, and yet so tersely that it is clear he had considered them. This clearness joined with simplicity is wonderful.

Who taught the evangelists the qualities of an entirely heroic soul, that they should paint it so perfectly in Jesus Christ? Why did they describe him weak in his agony? Did they not know how to paint a steadfast death? No doubt they did, for the same Saint Luke paints the death of Saint Stephen as braver than that of Jesus Christ.

They describe him therefore as capable of fear before the need of dying came, and then wholly strong.

But when they represent him as so afflicted, it is when he afflicts himself, and when men afflict him, then is he wholly strong.

The style of the Gospel is wonderful in many ways, and in this among others, that it contains no invectives against the executioners and enemies of Jesus Christ. The historians do not rail against Judas, Pilate, nor any of the Jews.

If this modesty of the evangelical writers had been simulated, as well as many other traits of a beautiful character, and they had only simulated it to attract observation, even if they had not dared to draw attention to it themselves, they would not have failed to procure friends, who would have remarked on it to their advantage. But as they acted thus without dissimulation, and from perfectly disinterested motives, they pointed it out to no one, and I believe that many points of this kind have never been noticed till now, which is an evidence of how dispassionately all was done.

The apostles were either deceived or deceivers. Both hypotheses are difficult; for it is not possible to mistake a man raised from the dead....

While Jesus Christ was with them, his presence might sustain them, but after that, what gave them force to act if he did not appear to them?

Proof of Jesus Christ. — The supposition that the apostles were deceivers is thoroughly absurd. Suppose we follow it out, and imagine these twelve men assembled after the death of Jesus Christ, making a plot to say that he was risen again. By this they attack all earthly powers. The heart of man is strangely inclined to fickleness and change, swayed by promises and by wealth. Had one of these men contradicted themselves under these temptations, nay more, had they done so in prison, in torture and in death, they were lost. Let that be followed out.

Hypothesis that the apostles were deceivers.

The time clearly.

The manner obscurely.

Five typical proofs.

1,600 prophets.

2,000
400 scattered.

Atheists. — What reason have they to say it is not possible to rise again? Which is the more difficult, to be born or to rise again; that that which has never been should be, or that what has been should be again? Is it more difficult to come into being than to return to it? Habit causes the one to seem easy to us, the want of habit causes the other to seem impossible. The popular way of judging.

Why should not a virgin bear a child? does not a hen lay eggs without a cock? What distinguishes these outwardly from others? and who has told us that the hen may not form the germ as well as the cock?

What have they to say against the resurrection, or against the child-bearing of the Virgin? which is the more difficult; to produce a man or an animal, or to reproduce it? And if they had never seen any species of animal, could they guess that they were not produced without connection with each other?

How I hate these follies of not believing in the Eucharist, etc.... If the Gospel be true, if Jesus Christ be God, what difficulty is there?

It is impiety not to believe in the Eucharist on the ground that we do not see it.

THE MISSION AND GREATNESS OF JESUS CHRIST.



WE KNOW GOD only by Jesus Christ. Without this mediator all communion with God is taken away, by Jesus Christ we know God. All who have thought to know God, and to prove him without Jesus Christ, have had but feeble proofs. But for proof of Jesus Christ we have the prophecies, which are solid and palpable proofs. And these prophecies, accomplished and proved true by the event, mark the certainty of these truths, and consequently the divinity of Jesus Christ. In him then, and by him we know God; apart from him, and without the Scripture, without original sin, without a necessary mediator, foretold and come, we could not absolutely prove God, nor teach sound doctrine and sound morality. But by Jesus Christ, and in Jesus Christ we prove God and teach morality and doctrine. Jesus Christ is then the true God of men.

But we know at the same time our misery, for this God is none other than he who repairs our misery. Thus we can only know God well by knowing our sins. Therefore those who have known God without knowing their misery, have not glorified him, but have glorified themselves. *Quia non cognovit per sapientiam, placuit Deo per stultitiam prædicationis salvos facere.*

Not only do we know God by Jesus Christ alone, but we know ourselves by Jesus Christ alone. We know life and death by Jesus Christ alone. Apart from Jesus Christ we know not what is our life, nor our death, nor God, nor ourselves.

Thus without the Scripture, which has Jesus Christ alone for its object, we know nothing, and see only obscurity and confusion in the nature of God, and in our own nature.

Without Jesus Christ man must be plunged in vice and misery; with Jesus Christ man is free from vice and misery, in him is all our virtue and all our happiness. Apart from him is nought but vice and misery, error and darkness, death and despair.

Without Jesus Christ the world would not exist, for it could only be either destroyed, or a very hell.

It is not only impossible but useless to know God without Jesus Christ. They have not withdrawn from him, but drawn near; they have not abased themselves, but....

Quo quisque optimus est, pessimus, si hoc ipsum, quod sit optimus, ascribat sibi.

The Gospel only speaks of the virginity of the Virgin up to the time of the birth of Jesus Christ. All with reference to Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ, whom the two Testaments regard, the Old as its end, the New as its model, both as their centre.

Scepticism is the truth. For, after all, men before Jesus Christ did not know either where they were or if they were great or little. And those who said one or the other knew nothing about it, and guessed without reason and by chance, yet they always erred in excluding one or the other.

Quod ergo ignorantes quæritis, Religio annuntiat vobis.

If Epictetus had seen the way with certainty he would have said to men: “You follow a false road”; he shows that there is another, but he does not lead there; it is the way of willing what God wills; Jesus Christ alone leads thither, *via*, *veritas*.

Jesus Christ did nothing but teach men that they were lovers of themselves, that they were slaves, blind, sick, miserable, and sinners, that he would deliver them, enlighten, bless, and heal them, that this would be brought about by hatred of self, and by following him through poverty and the death of the cross.

An artisan who speaks of riches, a lawyer who speaks of war, or of kingship, etc., but the rich man rightly speaks of riches, a king speaks slightingly of a great gift he has just made, and God rightly speaks of God.

Hosea iii.

Isaiah xlii, xlviii., liv., lx., lxi. The last verse. I have foretold it long since, that they might know that it is I.

Jaddus to Alexander.

Man is not worthy of God, but he is not incapable of being rendered worthy.

It is unworthy of God to unite himself to miserable man, but it is not unworthy of God to raise him from his misery.

The infinite distance between body and mind is a figure of the infinitely more infinite distance between mind and charity, for this is supernatural.

All the splendour of greatness has no lustre for those who seek understanding.

The greatness of men of understanding is invisible to kings, to the rich, to conquerors, and to all the great according to the flesh.

The greatness of wisdom, which has no existence save in God, is invisible to the carnal and to men of understanding. These are three orders differing in kind.

Men of great genius have their empire, their glory, their grandeur, their victory, their lustre, and do not need worldly greatness, with which they have nothing to do. They are seen, not by the eye, but by the mind; and that is enough.

The saints have their empire, their glory, their victory, their lustre, and want no glory of the flesh or of the mind, with which they have nothing to do, for these

add nothing to them neither do they take away. They are seen of God and the angels, and not by the bodily eye, nor by the curious spirit; God suffices them.

Archimedes without worldly pomp would have had the same reverence. He fought no battles for the eye to gaze on, but he left his discoveries to all minds. O! how brilliant was he to the mind.

Jesus Christ, without riches, and without any exterior manifestation of science, is in his own order of holiness. He gave forth no scientific inventions to the world, he never reigned; but he was humble, patient, holy; holy before God, terrible to devils, without spot of sin. O! in what great pomp, and with what transcendent magnificence did he come to the eyes of the heart, which discern wisdom.

It would have been needless for Archimedes, though of princely birth, to have played the prince in his books on geometry.

It would have been needless to our Lord Jesus Christ for the purpose of shining in his kingdom of holiness, to come as kings come; but he did come in the glory proper to his order.

It is most unreasonable to be offended at the lowliness of Jesus Christ, as if this lowliness were in the same order as was the greatness which he came to display. Let us consider this greatness in his life, in his passion, in his obscurity, in his death, in the choice of his disciples, in their desertion of him, in the secrecy of his resurrection, and the rest, and it will seem so vast as to give no room for offence at a lowliness in another order.

But there are those who can only admire carnal as though there were no mental greatness, and others who only admire mental greatness, as though there were not infinitely greater heights in wisdom.

All bodies, the firmament, the stars, the earth and the kingdoms thereof, are not comparable to the lowest mind, for mind knows all these, and itself; the body nothing.

All bodies together and all minds together, and all they can effect, are not worth the least motion of charity. This is of an order infinitely more exalted.

From all bodies together, we cannot extract one little thought: this is impossible and in another order. From all bodies and minds it is impossible to produce a single motion of true charity, it is impossible, it is in another and a supernatural order.

The Jews, in testing if he were God, have shown that he was man.

The Church has had as much difficulty in showing that Jesus Christ was man, against those who denied it, as in showing that he was God. And the evidences were equally great.

Jesus Christ is a God to whom we draw near without pride, and before whom we abase ourselves without despair.

Jesus Christ for all, Moses for a people.

The Jews were blessed in Abraham. “I will bless those that bless thee.” But all nations are blessed in his seed.

Parum est ut, etc. Isaiah.

Lumen ad revelationem gentium.

Non fecit taliter omni nationi, said David in speaking of the Law. But in speaking of Jesus Christ it must be said: *Fecit taliter omni nationi*.

So it is the property of Jesus Christ to be universal; even the Church offers the sacrifice only for the faithful. Jesus Christ offered that of the cross for all.

The victory over death. What advantageth it a man that he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? He that will save his soul shall lose it.

I am not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil. Lambs took not away the sins of the world, but I am the lamb who take away sins. Moses gave you not that bread from heaven. Moses has not led you out of captivity, and made you truly free.

Types. — Jesus Christ opened their mind to understand the Scriptures.

There are two great revelations.

1. All things happened to them in figures: *vere Israelitæ, vere liberi*, true bread from heaven.

2. A God humbled to the cross. It was necessary that Christ should suffer and enter into glory, that he should conquer death by death. Two advents.

The types of the completeness of redemption, as that the sun gives light to all, denote only completeness, but they figuratively imply exclusions, as the Jews elected to the exclusion of the Gentiles denote exclusion.

Jesus Christ the Redeemer of all. — Yes, for he has offered, like a man who has ransomed all who willed to come to him. It is the misfortune of those who die on the way, but as far as he is concerned, he offers them redemption. — That holds good in the example, where he who ransoms and he who hinders from dying are two, but not in Jesus Christ, who does both one and the other. — No, for Jesus Christ in his quality of Redeemer, is not perhaps master of all, and thus so far as in him lies, he is the Redeemer of all.

Jesus Christ would not be slain without the forms of justice, for it is much more ignominious to die by justice than by an unjust sedition.

The elect will be ignorant of their virtues and the reprobate of the greatness of their crimes. “Lord, when saw we thee an hungered or athirst?” etc.

Jesus Christ would none of the testimony of devils, nor of those who were not called, but of God and John the Baptist.

Jesus Christ says not that he is not of Nazareth, to leave the wicked in their blindness; nor that he is not the son of Joseph.

The calling of the Gentiles by Jesus Christ.
The ruin of the Jews and heathen by Jesus Christ.

THE MYSTERY OF JESUS.



JESUS SUFFERED IN his passion the torments which men inflicted on him, but in his agony he suffered torments which he inflicted on himself: *turbare semetipsum*. This is a suffering from no human, but an almighty hand, and he who bears it must also be almighty.

Jesus sought some comfort at least in his three dearest friends, and they were asleep. He prayed them to watch with him awhile, and they left him with utter carelessness, having so little compassion that it could not hinder their sleeping even for a moment. And thus Jesus was left alone to the wrath of God.

Jesus was without one on the earth not merely to feel and share his suffering, but even to know of it; he and heaven were alone in that knowledge.

Jesus was in a garden, not of delight as the first Adam, in which he destroyed himself and the whole human race; but in one of agony, in which he saved himself and the whole human race.

He suffered this sorrow and this desertion in the horror of night.

I believe that Jesus never complained but on this single occasion, but then he complained as if he could no longer restrain his extreme sorrow. “My soul is sorrowful, even unto death.”

Jesus sought companionship and consolation from men. This was the only time in his life, as it seems to me; but he received it not, for his disciples were asleep.

Jesus will be in agony even to the end of the world. We must not sleep during that time.

Jesus in the midst of this universal desertion, even that of his own friends chosen to watch with him, finding them asleep, was vexed because of the danger to which they exposed, not him, but themselves; he warned them of their own

safety and of their good, with a heartfelt tenderness for them during their ingratitude, and warned them that the spirit is willing and the flesh weak.

Jesus, finding them still sleeping, unrestrained by any consideration for themselves or for him, had the tenderness not to wake them but to let them sleep on.

Jesus prayed, uncertain of the will of his Father, and feared death; but so soon as he knew it he went forward to offer himself to death: *Eamus. Processit.* John.

Jesus asked of men, and was not heard.

Jesus, while his disciples slept, wrought their salvation. He has wrought that of each of the just while they slept both in their nothingness before their birth, and in their sins after their birth.

He prayed only once that the cup should pass away, and then with submission; but twice that it should come if need were.

Jesus was weary.

Jesus, seeing all his friends asleep and all his enemies wakeful, gave himself over entirely to his Father.

Jesus did not regard in Judas his enmity, but God's order, which he loves and admits, since he calls him friend.

Jesus tore himself away from his disciples to enter into his agony; we must tear ourselves from our nearest and dearest to imitate him.

Jesus being in agony and in the greatest sorrow, let us pray longer....

Console thyself, thou wouldest not seek me hadst thou not found me.

I thought of thee in mine agony, such drops of blood I shed for thee.

It is tempting me rather than proving thyself, to think if thou wouldest act well in a case which has not occurred, I will act in thee if it occur.

Let my rules guide thy conduct; see how I have led the Virgin and the saints who have let me act in them.

The Father loves all that I do.

Must I ever shed the blood of my humanity and thou give no tears?

Thy conversion is my affair; fear not and pray with confidence as for me.

I am present with thee by my word in the Scriptures, by my Spirit in the Church and by inspiration, by my power in the priest, by my prayer in the faithful.

Physicians will not heal thee, for thou wilt die at last. But it is I who heal thee and make the body immortal.

Suffer chains and bodily servitude, I deliver thee now only from what is spiritual.

I am to thee more a friend than such or such an one, for I have done for thee more than they; they have not borne what I have borne from thee, they have not died for thee as I have done in the time of thine infidelities and thy cruelties, and as I am ready to do and do in my elect and at the Holy Sacrament.

If thou knewest thy sins thou wouldest lose heart. — I shall lose it then O Lord, for on thy word I believe their malice. — No, for I by whom thou learnest it can heal thee of them, and what I tell thee is a sign that I will heal thee. As thou dost expiate them, thou wilt know them, and it will be said to thee: “Behold, thy sins are forgiven thee!”

Repent then for thy secret sins, and for the hidden malice of those which thou knowest.

Lord, I give thee all. —

I love thee more ardently than thou hast loved thine uncleannesses, *ut immundus pro luto*.

To me be the glory, not to thee, thou worm of earth.

Ask thy director, when my own words are to thee occasion of evil, or vanity, or curiosity.

I see the depths which are in me of pride, curiosity and lust. There is no relation between me and God, nor Jesus Christ the Just One. But he has been made sin for me, all thy scourges are fallen upon him. He is more abominable than I, and far from abhorring me he holds himself honoured that I go to him and succour him.

But he has healed himself, and still more will he heal me.

I must add my wounds to his, and join me to him, and he will save me in saving himself.

But this must not be put off to a future day.

Do little things as though they were great, because of the majesty of Jesus Christ who does them in us, and who lives our life; do great things as though they were small and easy, because of his omnipotence.

The Sepulchre of Jesus Christ. — Jesus Christ was dead, but seen on the Cross. He was dead, and hidden in the sepulchre.

Jesus Christ was buried by the saints alone.

Jesus Christ worked no miracles at the sepulchre.

Only the saints entered it.

There, not on the Cross, Jesus Christ took a new life.

It is the last mystery of the passion and the redemption.

Jesus Christ had no where to rest on earth but in the sepulchre.

His enemies only ceased to persecute him at the sepulchre.

I consider Jesus Christ in all persons and in ourselves. Jesus Christ as a father in his father, Jesus Christ as a brother in his brethren, Jesus Christ as poor in the poor, Jesus Christ as rich in the rich, Jesus Christ as doctor and priest in priests, Jesus Christ as sovereign in princes, etc. For by his glory he is all that is great, since he is God; and he is by his mortal life all that is miserable and abject. Therefore he has taken this wretched state, to enable him to be in all persons, and the model of all conditions.

The false justice of Pilate only caused the suffering of Jesus Christ; for he caused him to be scourged by his false justice, and then slew him. It would have been better that he had slain him at first. Thus is it with those who are falsely just. They do good works or evil to please the world, and show that they are not

altogether of Jesus Christ, for they are ashamed of him. Then at last in great temptations and on great occasions, they slay him.

It seems to me that Jesus Christ after his resurrection allowed his wounds only to be touched: *Noli me tangere*. We must unite ourselves to his sufferings only.

At the Last Supper he gave himself in communion as one about to die; to the disciples at Emmaus as one risen from the dead; to the whole Church as one ascended into heaven.

Compare not thyself with others, but with me. If thou findest me not in those with whom thou comparest thyself, thou comparest thyself with him that is abominable. If thou findest me there compare thyself to me. But who is it that thou dost compare? Thyself, or me in thee? If it be thyself it is one that is abominable; if it be me thou comparest me to myself. Now I am God in all.

I speak and often counsel thee because thy Guardian can not speak to thee, for I will not that thou shouldest lack a guide.

And perhaps I do so at his prayers, and thus he leads thee without thy seeing it.

Thou wouldest not seek me unless thou didst possess me.

Therefore be not troubled.

Be comforted; it is not from yourself that you must expect it; but on the contrary, expecting nothing from yourself, you must await it.

Pray that ye enter not into temptation. It is dangerous to be tempted, and those alone are tempted who do not pray.

Et tu conversus confirma fratres tuos. But before, *conversus Jesus respexit Petrum*.

Saint Peter asked permission to strike Malchus, and struck before having the answer; Jesus Christ answered afterwards.

I love poverty because he loved it. I love wealth because it gives the power of helping the miserable. I keep my troth to everyone; rendering not evil to those who do me wrong; but I wish them a lot like mine, in which I receive neither good nor evil from men. I try to be just, true, sincere, and faithful to all men; I have a tender heart for those to whom God has more closely bound me; and whether I am alone or seen of men I place all my actions in the sight of God, who shall judge them, and to whom I have consecrated them all.

Such are my opinions, and each day of my life I bless my Redeemer who has implanted them in me, who has transformed me, a man full of weakness, misery, and lust, of pride and ambition, into a man exempt from all these evils, by the power of his grace, to which all the glory is due; since of myself I have only misery and sin.

OF THE TRUE RIGHTEOUS MAN AND

OF THE TRUE CHRISTIAN.



Members. To begin with that. — To regulate the love which we owe to ourselves, we must imagine a body full of thinking members, for we are members of the whole, and see how each member should love itself, etc....

If the feet and the hands had each a separate will they could only be in their order in submitting this separate will to the primary will which governs the whole body. Apart from that they are in disorder and misfortune, but in willing only the good of the body they find their own good.

Morality. — God having made the heavens and the earth, which cannot feel the happiness of their being, he has been pleased to make beings who should know it, and who should compose a body of thinking members. For our members do not feel the happiness of their union, of their admirable intelligence, of the care which nature has taken to infuse into them a mind, and to make them grow and endure. How happy would they be if they could see and feel it. But in order to this they must needs have intelligence to know it, and good will to consent to that of the universal soul. For if, having received intelligence, they used it to retain nourishment for themselves without allowing it to pass to the other members, they would be not only unjust but also miserable, and would hate rather than love themselves, their blessedness as well as their duty consisting in their consent to the guidance of the general soul to which they belong, who loves them better than they love themselves.

To be a member, is to have neither life, being, nor movement save by the spirit of the body, and for the body; the separate member, seeing no longer the body to

which it belongs, has only a waning and dying existence. Yet it believes it is a whole, and seeing not the body on which it depends, it believes it depends only on self and wills to constitute itself both centre and body. But not having in itself a principle of life, it only goes astray, and is astonished in the uncertainty of its being; fully aware that it is not a body, yet not seeing that it is a member of a body. Then when at last it arrives at the knowledge of self, it has returned as it were to its own home, and loves itself only for the body's sake, bewailing that in the past it has gone astray.

It cannot by its nature love aught else, if not for itself and to subject it to self, since each thing loves itself above all. But in loving the body it loves itself, because it has no being but in it, by it, and for it. *Qui adhæret Deo unus spiritus est.*

The body loves the hand, and the hand, if it had a will, should love itself in the same proportion as that in which it is loved by the soul. All love beyond this is unjust.

Adhærens Deo unus spiritus est. We love ourselves because we are members of Jesus Christ. We love Jesus Christ because he is the body of which we are members. All is one, one is in the other, like the Three Persons.

The examples of the noble deaths of the Lacedæmonians and others scarce touch us, for what good do they to us? But the example of the death of the martyrs touches us, for they are our members. We have a common tie with them, their resolution can form ours, not only by example, but because it has perhaps merited ours. There is nothing of this in the examples of the heathen; there is no bond between us. As we do not become rich by seeing a rich stranger, but by seeing a father or a husband who is so.

We must love God only, and hate self only.

If the foot had always been ignorant that it belonged to the body, and that there was a body on which it depended, if it had only had the knowledge and the love

of self, and if it came to know that it belonged to a body on which it depended, what regret, what confusion for the past life, for having been useless to the body from which its whole life was derived, which would have reduced it to nothing if it had rejected it and separated it from itself, as it held itself apart from the body. What prayers for its preservation in the body, with what submission would it allow itself to be governed according to the will which rules the body, even to consent, if need be, that it should be cut off, or it would lose its character of member. For each member must be content to perish for the body, for which alone the whole exists.

To ensure the happiness of the members, they must have one will, and submit it to the body.

It is false that we are worthy of the love of others, it is unjust that we should desire it. If we were born reasonable and impartial, knowing ourselves and others, we should not give this bias to our will. But we are born with it; we are therefore born unjust, for all tends to self. This is contrary to all order. We should look to the general advantage, and the inclination to self is the beginning of all disorder, in war, in politics, in economy, and in man's own body.

The will therefore is depraved. If the members of natural and civil communities tend towards the well-being of the body, the communities themselves should tend to the welfare of another more general body of which they are members. We should therefore look to the whole. We are therefore born unjust and depraved.

He who hates not in himself his self-love, and that instinct which leads him to make himself a God, is indeed blinded. All must see that nothing is so opposed to justice and truth. For it is false that we deserve this, and it is unjust and impossible to attain it, since all demand the same. Manifestly then injustice is

innate in us, from which we cannot free ourselves, yet from which we ought to free ourselves.

But no religion has pointed out that this is a sin, or that we are born in it, or that we are bound to resist it, or has thought of offering us a cure.

It is unjust that any should attach themselves to me, even though they do it with pleasure, and voluntarily. I should deceive those in whom I aroused this desire, for I am not the final end of any, nor have I that which can satisfy them. Am I not about to die? And thus the object of their attachment will die. Thus as it would be blameworthy in me to cause a falsehood to be believed, though I should gently insinuate it, though it should be believed with pleasure, and though it should give me pleasure; in like manner it is blameworthy in me if I make myself beloved, and if I draw persons to attach themselves to me. I ought to warn those who are ready to consent to a lie, that they should not believe it, whatever advantage accrues to me from it; and in the same way that they should not attach themselves to me; for they ought to spend their life and their pains in pleasing God, or in seeking him.

Self-will never will be satisfied, though it should have power for all it would; but we are satisfied from the moment we renounce it. Without it we cannot be discontented, with it we cannot be content.

To hate self, and to seek a truly lovable being to love, is therefore the true and only virtue, for we are hateful because of lust. But as we cannot love what is outside us, we must love a being which is in us, yet not ourselves, and that is true of each and all men. Now the universal Being is alone such. The Kingdom of God is within us; the universal good is within us, is our very selves, yet not ourselves.

If there be a God we ought to love him alone, and not the creatures of a day. The reasoning of the wicked in the *Book of Wisdom* is only founded on the non-

existence of God. “Given that there is no God,” say they, “let us take delight in the creature. It is because there is nothing better.” But were there a God to love they would not have come to this conclusion, but to the contrary. And this is the conclusion of the wise: “There is a God, therefore we ought not to take delight in the creature.”

Therefore all that leads us to attach ourselves to the creature is evil, because it hinders us from serving God if we know him, and from seeking him if we know him not. Now we are full of lust. Therefore we are full of evil, therefore we should hate ourselves and all which urges us to attach ourselves to aught but God only.

That we must love one God only is a thing so plain, that no miracles are needed to prove it.

That is a good state of the Church in which it is upheld by God alone.

Two laws suffice to regulate the whole Christian republic better than all political laws.

Against those who trusting in the mercy of God live carelessly, without doing good works. — As the two sources of our sins are pride and indolence, God has revealed to us two of his attributes for their cure, mercy and justice. The property of justice is to abase our pride, however holy may be our works, *et non intres in judicium, etc.*; and the property of mercy is to combat indolence by exciting to good works, according to that passage: “The goodness of God leads to repentance,” and that other of the Ninevites: “Let us do penance to see if peradventure he will pity us.” Thus mercy is so far from authorising slackness, that it is on the contrary the quality which formally assails it, so that instead of saying: “Were there not mercy in God, we must make every effort after virtue,” we should say, on the contrary, that because there is mercy in God we must make every effort.

The world exists for the exercise of mercy and judgment, not as if men were in it as they came from the hands of God, but as the enemies of God, to whom he gives by grace light enough to return, if they will seek him and follow him, and to punish them, if they refuse to seek him and follow him.

We implore the mercy of God, not that he may leave us in peace in our vices, but that he may free us from them.

There are but two kinds of men, the righteous, who believe themselves sinners, and sinners, who believe themselves righteous.

There are two kinds of men in each religion. — Among the heathen, worshippers of beasts, and the worshippers of the one God revealed by natural religion.

Among the Jews, the carnal and the spiritual, who were the Christians of the old law.

Among the Christians, those coarser ones, who are the Jews of the new law.

The carnal Jews looked for a carnal Messiah, and the coarser Christians believe that the Messiah has dispensed them from the love of God. True Jews and true Christians adore a Messiah who makes them love God.

Carnal Jews and the heathen have their miseries, and Christians also. There is no Redeemer for the heathen, for they do not even hope for one. There is no Redeemer for the Jews, who hope for him in vain. There is a Redeemer only for the Christians.

The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, pride, etc.

There are three orders of things: the flesh, the spirit, and the will.

The carnal are the rich and kings, who have the body as their object.

Enquirers and men of science, who have mind for their object.

The wise, who have right for their object.

God must reign over all, and all must be referred to him. In things of the flesh lust reigns especially, in men of intellect curiosity especially, in wisdom pride especially.

Not that a man may not boast of wealth or knowledge, but there is no room for pride, for in granting that a man is learned there will be no difficulty in proving to him that he is wrong to be proud. Pride finds its proper place in wisdom, for it cannot be granted to a man that he has made himself wise and that he is wrong to be proud of it. For that is just. Now God alone gives wisdom, and therefore *qui gloriatur in Domino, glorietur*.

All that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, or the pride of life; *libido sentiendi, libido sciendi, libido dominandi*. Woe to the accursed land which these three rivers of flame enkindle rather than moisten. Happy they who are on these rivers, not overwhelmed nor carried away, but immovably fixed upon the floods, not standing, but seated, and on a firm and sure base, whence they rise not before the dawn; but where, having rested in peace, they stretch forth their hands to him who will lift them up, and cause them to stand firm and upright in the porches of the heavenly Jerusalem, where pride may no more assail nor cast them down; and who yet weep, not to see all those perishable things crumble which the torrents sweep away, but at the remembrance of their dear country, that heavenly Jerusalem, which they remember without ceasing while the days of their exile are prolonged.

The rivers of Babylon rush and fall and sweep away.

O holy Sion, where all is firm and nothing falls.

We must sit upon the floods, not under them or in them, but on them; not standing but seated, being seated to be humble, and above them in security. But in the porches of Jerusalem we shall stand.

Let us see if our pleasure is stable or transitory, if it pass away, it is a river of Babylon.

There are few true Christians, I say this even in regard to faith. There are many who believe, but from superstition. There are many who believe not, out of reckless living; few are between the two.

I do not include here those whose morality is true holiness, nor those whose belief springs from the heart.

It is not a rare thing to have to blame the world for too much docility, it is a vice as natural as unbelief, and as pernicious. Superstition.

Abraham took nothing for himself, but only for his servants; so the just man takes for himself nothing of the world, nor of the applause of the world, but only for his passions, which he uses as their master, saying to the one, 'Go,' and to another, 'Come.' *Sub te erit appetitus tuus.* The passions thus subdued are virtues. God himself attributes to himself avarice, jealousy, anger; and these are virtues as well as kindness, pity, constancy, which are also passions. We must treat them as slaves, and leaving to them their food hinder the soul from taking any of it. For when the passions gain the mastery they are vices, then they furnish nutriment to the soul, and the soul feeds on it and is poisoned.

The just man acts by faith in the smallest things; when he blames his servants, he wishes for their conversion by the spirit of God, and prays God to correct them; for he expects as much from God as from his own blame, and he prays God to bless his corrections. And so with all his other actions.

Of all that is in the world he takes part only in what is unpleasant, not in what is pleasant. He loves his neighbours, but his charity does not restrict itself within these bounds, but flows out to his enemies, and then to those of God.

This is common to ordinary life and that of the saints, that all endeavour after happiness, and differ only in the object in which they place it. Both call those their enemies who hinder them from attaining it.

We should judge of what is good or bad by the will of God, who cannot be either unjust or blind; and not by our own will, which is always full of malice and error.

Joh. viii. *Multi crediderunt in eum. Dicebat ergo Jesus: "Si manseritis..., vere mihi discipuli eritis, et veritas liberabit vos." Responderunt: Semen Abrahae sumus et nemini servimus unquam.*

There is a great difference between disciples and true disciples. They are recognised by saying to them that the truth will make them free; for if they answer that they are free, and that it is in their power to come out of slavery to the devil, they are indeed disciples, but not true disciples.

"Might I but see a miracle," men say, "I would become a Christian." How can they be sure they would do that of which they are ignorant? Men imagine that conversion consists in making of the worship of God such a transaction and way of life as they picture to themselves. True conversion consists in the annihilation of self before that universal Being whom we have so often provoked, and who might with justice destroy us at any moment; in recognising that we can do nought without him, and have merited nothing from him but his wrath. It consists in knowing that there is unconquerable opposition between us and God, and that without a mediator there could be no communion with him.

Comminutum cor. Saint Paul. There is the Christian character. *Albe vous a nommé, je ne vous connais plus.* Corneille. That is the inhuman character. The human character is the contrary.

With how little pride a Christian believes himself united to God, with how little abasement does he rank himself with the worms of earth. What a way is this to receive life and death, good and evil.

It is true there is difficulty in entering into a devout life, but this difficulty does not arise from the religion which begins in us, but from the irreligion which is still there. If our senses were not opposed to penitence, and if our corruption were not opposed to the purity of God, there would be nothing in this painful to us. We suffer only in proportion as the vice which is natural to us resists supernatural grace; our heart feels torn asunder by these conflicting efforts, but it would be most unjust to impute this violence to God, who draws us, instead of attributing it to the world, which holds us back. As a child which a mother tears from the robbers' arms, in the anguish it suffers should love the loving and legitimate violence of her who procures its liberty, and detest only the imperious and tyrannical violence of those who retain it unjustly. The most cruel war which God can make against men in this life is to leave them without that war which he came to bring. "I came to bring war," he says, and to inform them of this war, "I came to bring fire and the sword." Before him the world lived in a false peace.

The exterior must be joined to the interior to obtain aught from God, that is to say, we must kneel, pray with the lips, etc., in order that proud man, who would not submit himself to God, should now be subject to the creature. To expect succour from these externals is superstition, to refuse to join them to interior acts is pride.

External works. — There is nothing so perilous as that which is pleasing to God and to man; for those conditions which are pleasing to God and man, have one side which is pleasing to God, and another which is pleasing to man; as the greatness of Saint Theresa. That which was pleasing to God was her profound humility under her revelations, what was pleasing to men was her light. And thus

we torment ourselves to imitate her discourses, thus thinking to imitate her condition, and thereby to love what God loves, and to place ourselves in a state which God loves.

It is better not to fast, and be thereby humbled, than to fast and be puffed up therewith.

The pharisee and the publican.

What will memory avail me if it be alike hurtful and helpful, since all depends upon the blessing of God, who gives only to things done for him according to his rules and in his ways, the manner being thus as important as the thing, and perhaps more; since God can bring good out of evil, and because without God we bring evil out of good.

The hope which Christians have of possessing an infinite good is mingled with actual enjoyment as well as with fear; for it is not as with those who should hope for a kingdom, of which they being subjects would have nothing; but they hope for holiness, and freedom from injustice, of which they possess somewhat.

None is so happy as a true Christian, none so reasonable, none so virtuous, none so amiable.

We remove ourselves from God only by removing ourselves from love.

Our prayers and our virtues are abomination before God if they are not the prayers and the virtues of Jesus Christ. And our sins will never be the object of the mercy, but of the justice of God, if they are not those of Jesus Christ.

He has adopted our sins, and has admitted us into covenant with him, for virtues are his own, and sins are strange to him; while virtues are strange to us, and sins are our own.

Let us change the rule which we have hitherto adopted for judging what is good. We have had our own will as our rule in this respect, let us now take the

will of God, all that he wills is good and right to us, all that he wills not is evil.

All that God allows not is forbidden; sins are forbidden by the general declaration that God has made, that he allows them not. Other things which he has left without general prohibition, and which for that reason are said to be permitted, are nevertheless not always permitted; for when God removes any one of them from us, and when, by the event, which is a manifestation of the will of God, it appears that God allows not that we should have a thing, that is then forbidden to us as sin, since the will of God is that we should not have one more than the other. There is this sole difference between these two things, that it is certain God will never allow sin, while it is not certain that he will never allow the other. But so long as God allows it not, we must look upon it as sin, so long as the absence of God's will, which alone is all goodness and all justice, renders it unjust and evil.

True Christians nevertheless submit to folly, not because they respect folly, but the commandment of God, who for the punishment of men has put them in subjection to their follies. *Omnis creatura subjecta est vanitati. Liberabitur.* Thus Saint Thomas explains the passage in Saint James on giving place to the rich, that if they do it not in the sight of God the commandment of religion is set at naught.

All great amusements are dangerous to the Christian life, but among all those which the world has invented none is so much to be feared as the theatre. It is so natural and so delicate a representation of the passions that it moves them, and makes them spring up in our heart, above all that of love, principally when it is represented as very chaste and very honourable. For the more innocent it seems to innocent souls, the more are they capable of being touched by it; its violence pleases our self-love, which at once forms the desire of causing the same effects which we see so well represented, and at the same time we make for ourselves a conscience founded on the honour of the feelings which we see there. And this

extinguishes the fear of pure souls which imagine there is no harm to purity in loving with a love which seems to them so moderate.

Thus we leave the theatre with our heart so full of all the beauty and tenderness of love, the soul and the mind so persuaded of its innocence, that we are fully prepared to receive its first impressions, or rather to seek occasion to let them be born in the heart of some one, in order that we may receive the same pleasures and the same sacrifices which we have seen so well depicted in the theatre.

The circumstances in which it is easiest to live according to the world are those in which it is most difficult to live according to God, and *vice versâ*. Nothing is so difficult according to the world as the religious life; nothing is more easy according to God. Nothing is easier than to live in great office and great wealth according to the world; nothing is more difficult than to live in them according to God, and not to take part in them and love them.

Those who believe without having read the Old and New Testaments, do so because they have a saintly frame of mind, with which all that they hear of our Religion agrees. They feel that a God has made them; their will is to love God only, their will is to hate themselves only. They feel that they have no power of themselves, that they are unable to come to God, and if God come not to them, they can have no communion with him. And they hear our Religion declare that men must love God only, and hate self only, but that all being corrupt, and unfit for God, God made himself man to unite himself to us. No more is needed to convince men who have such a disposition and have a knowledge of their duty and of their incompetence.

Those whom we see to be Christians without the knowledge of the prophecies and evidences, are able to judge of their religion as well as those who have that knowledge. They judge of it by the heart, as others by the understanding. God himself inclines them to believe, and thus they are effectually persuaded.

I admit that one of those Christians who believe without proof is not perhaps qualified to convince an infidel who will say the same of himself; but those who know the proofs of religion can prove without difficulty that such a believer is truly inspired by God, though he cannot prove it himself.

For God having said by his prophets, who are beyond a doubt prophets, that in the reign of Jesus Christ he will spread his spirit abroad among all nations, that the young men and maidens and the children of the Church will prophesy, there is no doubt that the spirit of God is upon these, and not upon the others.

Wonder not to see simple souls believe without reasoning. God gives to them the love of him, and the hate of self, he inclines their heart to belief. No man will ever believe with true and saving faith if God incline not the heart, but each will believe as soon as he inclines it And this is what David knew well: *Inclina cor meum, Deus, in testimonia tua*.

Romans iii. 27: Boasting is excluded, by what law? Of works? no, but by that of faith. Therefore faith is not in our power, like the works of the law, and it is given us in another way.

Faith is a gift of God, do not suppose us to say it is a gift of reason. Other religions do not say this of their faith, they proffered only reason as a means of attaining to it, which after all does not lead to it.

Faith, it is true, says what the senses do not say, but not the contrary of what they perceive. It is above them, not contrary to them.

I am envious of those whom I see professing the true faith, but living and abusing a gift of which it seems to me I should make a very different use.

The law imposed what it did not bestow; grace bestows that which it imposes.

The law has not destroyed Nature, but has instructed it; grace has not destroyed the law, but has called it into action.

Faith received at baptism is the source of the whole life of the Christian and of the converted.

We make an idol of truth itself, for truth apart from charity is not God, it is his image and idol, which we must neither love nor adore; still less must we love and adore its opposite, which is falsehood.

Submission and use of reason, in which consists true Christianity.

The last process of reason is to recognise that there is an infinity of things which transcend it; it is but weak if it does not go so far as to know that.

And if natural things transcend it, what shall we say of the supernatural?

Submission. — We must know when to doubt, when to feel certain, when to submit. Who fails in this understands not the force of reason. There are those who offend against these three rules, either by accepting everything as evidence, for want of knowing what evidence is; or by doubting everything, for want of knowing when to submit; or by yielding in everything, for want of knowing when to use their judgment.

There are three means of belief; reason, habit, inspiration. The Christian religion, which only has reason, does not admit as her true children those who believe without inspiration; not that she excludes reason or habit, rather the contrary, but it is necessary to open the mind to proofs, to confirm ourselves by habit, and then to offer ourselves humbly to inspiration, which alone can produce a true and salutary effect. *Ne evacuetur crux Christi.*

There are two ways of urging the truths of our religion; one by the force of reason, the other by the authority of the speaker.

We use not the last, but the first. We do not say: “You must believe this, for the Scripture which says so is divine,” but we say: You must believe for such and such a reason, which are weak arguments, since reason bends itself to all.

If we submit all to reason our religion will have nothing in it mysterious or supernatural. If we violate the principles of reason, our religion will be absurd and ridiculous.

Saint Augustine. Reason would never submit if it did not judge that on some occasions submission is a duty.

It is then right that it should submit, when it judges that it ought to submit.

Piety is different from superstition.

To carry piety as far as superstition is to destroy it.

Heretics reproach us with this superstitious submission. This is to do that with which they reproach us.

There is nothing so conformable to reason as the disavowal of reason.

Two excesses: to exclude reason, and to admit reason only.

Superstition and lust. Scruples, evil desires, evil fear.

Fear, not such as arises from a belief in God, but that which springs from doubt whether he is or is not. True fear comes from faith, false fear from doubt. True fear is allied to hope, because it is born of faith, and because men hope in the God in whom they behave; false fear is allied to despair, because they fear the God in whom they do not believe. The one class fears to lose him, the other fears to find him.

A person said to me one day that when he came from confession he felt great joy and confidence. Another said to me that he was still fearful, whereupon I thought that these two together would make one good man, and that each was so far wanting in that he had not the feelings of the other. The same is often true in other matters.

The knowledge of God is very far from the love of him.

We are not wearied of eating and sleeping every day, because hunger and drowsiness are renewed; without that we should be weary of them. Thus without the hunger of spiritual things we grow weary of them. Hunger after righteousness, the eighth beatitude.

The conduct of God, who disposes all things gently, is to put religion into the mind by reason, and into the heart by grace. But to will to put it into the mind and heart by force and menace is not to put religion there, but terror, *terrorem potius quam religionem*.

THE ARRANGEMENT.



First part: Misery of man without God.

Second part: The happiness of man with God.

Or. *First part*: That Nature is naturally corrupt.

Second part: That the Scripture shows a Redeemer.

The arrangement by dialogues. — What ought I to do? I see only obscurity everywhere. Shall I believe that I am nothing, shall I believe that I am God?

All things change and succeed each other. — You are mistaken; there is....

A letter to lead to the search after God.

And then to cause him to be sought for among the philosophers, sceptics and dogmatists, who trouble all who seek them.

To pity those atheists who seek, for are they not unhappy enough? — To rail against those who make a boast of it.

To begin by pitying unbelievers, they are miserable enough by their condition. We ought not to revile them except where it may be serviceable, but it does them harm.

The arrangement. A letter of advice to a friend to lead him to seek, and he will answer: What is the good of seeking, since nothing comes to light. — Then to answer him: “Do not despair.” — And he will answer that he would be glad to find some light, but that according to this very Religion, thus to believe, will be of

no use to him: and that therefore he would as soon not seek. And to answer to that: The machine.

The arrangement. After the letter *that we ought to seek God*, to write the letter on *the removal of obstacles*; which is the discourse on the machine, on preparing the machine, on seeking by reason.

The letter which shows the use of proofs by the machine. Faith is different from proof; the one is human, the other the gift of God. *Justus ex fide vivit.* It is this faith that God himself puts into the heart, of which the proof is often the instrument, *fides ex auditu*; but this faith is in the heart, and makes us say not *scio*, but *credo*.

In the letter *on Injustice* may come the absurdity of the rule that the elder takes all. My friend, you were born on this side the mountain, it is therefore just that your elder brother should take all.

The arrangement. — Why should I take on myself to divide my moral qualities into four rather than into six? Why should I rather establish virtue in four, in two, in one? Why into *Abstine et sustine* rather than into *Follow nature*, or, *Conduct your private affairs without injustice*, as Plato, or anything else?

But there, you will say, is everything contained in one word. Yes, but that is useless, if not explained, and when we begin to explain it, as soon as the precept is opened which contains all the others, they issue in that first confusion which you wished to avoid. Thus when they are all enclosed in one they are concealed and useless, as in a box, and never appear but in their natural confusion. Nature has established them all without enclosing one in the other.

The arrangement. — Men despise Religion, they hate it, and fear it may be true. To cure this we must begin by showing that Religion is not contrary to

reason; then that it is venerable, to give respect for it; then to make it lovable, to make good men hope that it is true; then to show that it is true.

Venerable because it knows man well, lovable because it promises the true good.

The arrangement. — I should be far more afraid of making a mistake myself, and of finding that the Christian religion was true, than of not deceiving myself in believing it true.

The arrangement. — *After* corruption to say: "It is right that those who are in that state should know it, both those who are contented with it, and those who are discontented; but it is not right that all should see Redemption."

The arrangement. — To see what is clear and indisputable in the whole state of the Jews.

To the chapter on *Fundamentals* must be added that on *Things figurative* touching the reason of types. Why Jesus Christ was foretold at his first coming, why foretold obscurely as to the manner.

A letter, on the folly of human knowledge and philosophy.

This letter before *Diversion*.

The arrangement. — I might well have taken this discourse in some such order as the following: To show the vanity of every state of life, to show the vanity of ordinary lives, and then the vanity of philosophic lives, sceptics, stoics; but the order would not have been kept. I know a little what it is, and how few people know it. No human science can keep it. Saint Thomas did not keep it. Mathematics keep it, but these are useless by reason of their depth.

Without examining each particular occupation it will be enough to class them under Diversion.

OF MIRACLES IN GENERAL.



THE MIRACLE OF THE HOLY THORN.

The beginning. — Miracles are the test of doctrine, and doctrine is the test of miracles.

Of these there are false and true. There must be a mark whereby to know them, or they would be useless.

Now they are not useless, and are on the contrary fundamental Now it must be that the rule which he gives us be such as shall not impair the proof afforded by true miracles to the truth, which is the principal end of miracles.

Moses has given two; that the prediction does not come to pass, Deut. xviii., and that they do not lead to idolatry, Deut. xiii.; and Jesus Christ one.

If doctrine regulate miracles, miracles are useless for doctrine.

If miracles regulate....

Objection to the rule.

Discrimination between times. One rule in Moses's day, another at present.

Miracle. An effect which exceeds the natural force of the means employed, and non-miracle an effect not exceeding the natural force of the means employed. Thus those who heal by invocation of the devil work no miracle, for that does not exceed the natural power of the devil But....

The combinations of miracles.

A second miracle may suppose a first, but a first cannot suppose a second.

No one has ever suffered martyrdom for the miracles he says he has seen; the folly of men would perhaps go as far as martyrdom, for those which the Turks

believe by tradition, but not for those they have seen.

Were there no false miracles there would be certainty.

Were there no rule to test them, miracles would be useless, and there would be no reason for belief.

Now, humanly speaking, there is no human certainty, but reason.

It is said: *Believe the Church*, but it is not said: *Believe in Miracles*, because the last is natural and not the first. The one had need of a precept, not the other.

Miracles. — How I hate those who make men doubt of miracles. Montaigne speaks of them as he should in the two passages. In one we see how careful he is, yet in the other he believes, and laughs at unbelievers.

However it may be, the Church has no proofs if they are right.

Montaigne against miracles.

Montaigne for miracles.

The reason why men do not believe.

Joh. xii. 37. *Cum autem tanta signa fecisset, non credebant in eum, ut sermo Isaye impleretur. Excecavit, etc.*

Hæc dixit Isaias, quando vidit gloriam ejus, et locutus est de eo.

— Judæi signa petunt, et Græci sapientiam quærunt.

Nos autem Jesum crucifixum.

Sed plenum signis, sed plenum sapientia.

Vos autem Christum non crucifixistis, et religionem sine miraculis et sine sapientia.

The ground of disbelief in true miracles is want of charity. Joh. *Sed vos non creditis quia non estis ex ovibus.* The ground of belief in false miracles is want of charity.

2 Thess. ii.

The foundation of religion. This is miracle. Does God then speak against miracles, against the foundations of the faith which we have in him?

If there be a God, faith in God must exist on earth. Now the miracles of Jesus Christ are not foretold by Antichrist, but the miracles of Antichrist are foretold by Jesus Christ. Thus if Jesus Christ were not the Messiah he would have certainly led into error, but Antichrist could not certainly lead into error.

When Jesus Christ foretold the miracles of Antichrist, did he think of destroying faith in his own miracles?

Moses foretold Jesus Christ, and commanded to follow him; Jesus Christ foretold Antichrist, and forbade to follow him.

It was impossible that in the time of Moses any should assert their faith in Antichrist, who was unknown to them, but it is easy in the time of Antichrist to believe in Jesus Christ, already known.

There is no reason to believe in Antichrist which there is not to believe in Jesus Christ, but there are reasons for believing in Jesus Christ, which do not exist for the other.

Title: How it happens that men believe so many liars, who say they have seen miracles, and do not believe any of those who say they have secrets to make men immortal or render them young again. — Having considered how it happens that men have believed so many impostors, who pretend they have remedies, often to the length of putting their lives into their hands, it appears to me that the true cause is that there are true remedies. For it would not be possible there should be so many false, to which so much credence is given, were there none true. Were there no remedy for any evil, and were all diseases incurable, it is impossible that men should ever have imagined that they could give remedies, and still more impossible that so many others should have believed those who boasted that they had them. Just as if a man boasted that he could prevent death, no one would

believe him because there is no example of this. But as there are a number of remedies which are approved as true, even by the knowledge of the greatest men, the belief of men is thereby inclined; and since the thing was known to be possible, it has been therefore concluded that it was. For the public as a rule reasons thus: A thing is possible, therefore it is; because the thing cannot be denied generally, since there are particular effects which are true, the people, who cannot discriminate which among particular effects are true, believe them all. This is the reason that so many false effects are attributed to the moon, because there are some true, such as the tide.

It is the same with prophecies, miracles, divination by dreams, casting lots, etc. For if in all these matters nothing true had ever taken place, nothing of them had ever been believed; and so instead of concluding that there are no true miracles, because so many are false, we must on the contrary say that there are certainly true miracles because there are false, and that the false only exist because some are true. We must reason in the same way about Religion, for it would not be possible that men should have imagined so many false religions had there not been one that is true. The objection to this is that savages have a religion, but we answer that they have heard speak of the true, as appears by the deluge, circumcision, Saint Andrew's cross, etc.

Having considered how it comes that there are so many false miracles, false revelations, castings of lots, etc., it has appeared to me that the real cause is that there are true ones, for it would not be possible that there should be so many false miracles unless there were true, nor so many false revelations unless there were true, nor so many false religions unless there were one that is true. For if all this had never been, it is impossible that men should have imagined it, and still more impossible that so many others should have believed it. But as there have been very great things which are true and as they have been believed by great men; this impression has been produced, that almost everybody has been made capable of believing the false also; and thus instead of concluding that there are no true

miracles since there are so many false, we must on the contrary say that there are true miracles since there are so many false, and that false miracles only exist for the reason that there are true; so also that there are false religions only because there is one that is true. — The objection to this is that savages have a religion. But this is because they have heard speak of the true, as appears by Saint Andrew's cross, the deluge, the circumcision, etc. — This comes from the fact that the spirit of man, finding itself inclined to that side by truth, becomes therefore susceptible of all the falsehoods of that....

I should not be a Christian were it not for the miracles, said Saint Augustine.

But for the miracles there would have been no sin in not believing in Jesus Christ.

It is not possible to believe reasonably against miracles.

Miracles have so great a force that it was needful that God should warn us not to credit them against him, clear as it may be that there is a God; without this they would have been able to disturb.

And thus so far from these passages, Deut. xiii., making against the authority of miracles, nothing more marks their force. The same with Antichrist; "to seduce if it were possible even the very elect."

Abraham and Gideon are above revelation.

The Jews blinded themselves in judging of miracles by the Scripture. God has never left his true worshippers.

I prefer to follow Jesus Christ than any other, because he has miracle, prophecy, doctrine, perpetuity, etc.

The Donatists. No miracle which obliged them to say it was the devil.

The more we specialise God, Jesus Christ and the Church.

Jesus Christ worked miracles, then the apostles, and the early saints in great number, because the prophecies not being yet fulfilled, but only in the way of fulfilment by them, miracles were their only witness. It was foretold that the Messiah should convert the nations, and this prophecy could not be fulfilled without the conversion of the nations. Nor could the nations be converted to Messiah unless they saw the final effect of the prophecies concerning him. Till therefore he died and rose again, and had converted the nations, all was not fulfilled, wherefore miracles were needed during that time. We now need no more miracles against the Jews, for the fulfilment of prophecy is an enduring miracle.

Prophecy is not called *miracle*, as Saint John speaks of the first miracle in Cana, then of what Jesus Christ said to the woman of Samaria, revealing to her all her hidden life. Then he healed the centurion's son, and Saint John calls this the second sign.

Jesus Christ has verified that he was the Messiah, never in verifying his doctrine by Scripture and the prophecies, but always by his miracles.

He proves by a miracle that he remits sins.

Rejoice not that you work miracles, said Jesus Christ, but rather that your names are written in heaven.

If they believe not Moses, neither will they believe one risen from the dead.

Nicodemus recognised by his miracles, that his doctrine was of God. *Scimus quia venisti a Deo, magister, nemo enim potest facere quæ tu facis, nisi Deus fuerit cum eo.* He judged not of the miracles by the doctrine, but of the doctrine by the miracles.

Here is no country for truth, she wanders unknown among men. God has covered her with a veil which leaves her unrecognised by those who hear not her voice; the way is open for blasphemy even against those truths which are at the

least very apparent. If the truths of the Gospel are published, the contrary is also published, and questions are obscured, so that the people cannot discern, and they ask us, “What have you to make you believed rather than others? what sign do you give? you have words only, so have we, if you have miracles, good.” That doctrine must be supported by miracle is a truth of which they make a pretext to blaspheme against doctrine. And if miracles happen, it is said that miracles are not enough without doctrine, and that is another way of blaspheming against miracles.

Jesus Christ healed the man born blind, and worked many miracles on the sabbath day, and thus he blinded the Pharisees who said that miracles must be tested by doctrine.

“We have Moses, but as for this man, we know not whence he is.” It is wonderful that you know not whence he is, and yet he works such miracles.

Jesus Christ spoke neither against God, nor against Moses.

Antichrist and the false prophets foretold by both Testaments, will speak openly against God, and against Jesus Christ, who is not hidden. Whoever will be a secret enemy, God will not permit that he work miracles openly.

In a public dispute where the two parties declare themselves on the side of God, of Jesus Christ, or the Church, there have never been miracles on the side of the false Christians, while the other party has remained without miracle.

“He hath a devil,” John x. 21. “And others said, Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?”

The proofs which Jesus Christ and the Apostles draw from Scripture are not decisive, for they say only that Moses foretold that a prophet would come; but they do not thereby prove that Jesus Christ was that prophet, which is the whole question. These passages, then, serve only to show that we are not contrary to Scripture, and that there is no contradiction, not that there is accord. Now this is enough, there is no contradiction; and there are miracles.

It follows, then, that he judged miracles to be certain proofs of what he taught, and that the Jews were bound to believe him. And as a fact, it was the miracles

especially which made the unbelief of the Jews so blameworthy.

There is a reciprocal duty between God and men. We must forgive him this saying: *Quid debui*. "Accuse me," said God in Isaiah.

God must accomplish his promises, etc.

Men owe it to God to receive the Religion which he sends them. God owes it to men not to lead them into error. Now they would be led into error, if the workers of miracles should announce a doctrine which did not appear visibly false to the light of common sense, and if a greater worker of miracles had not already given warning not to believe in them.

Thus if there were division in the Church, and the Arians, for example, who no less than Catholics said they were founded on Scripture, had worked miracles, and the Catholics had worked none, men had been led into error.

For, as a man, who announces to us the secret things of God is not worthy to be believed on his private testimony, and on that very ground the wicked doubt him; so when a man as a sign of the communion which he has with God raises the dead, foretells the future, moves the seas, heals the sick, there is none so wicked as not to yield, and the incredulity of Pharaoh and the Pharisees is the effect of a supernatural hardening.

When, therefore, we see miracles and doctrine not open to suspicion both on one side, there is no difficulty. But when we see miracles and suspicious doctrine on the same side we must see which is the clearest. Jesus Christ was suspected.

Barjesus was blinded. The power of God is above that of his enemies.

The Jewish exorcists were beaten by devils, who said, "Jesus we know, and Paul we know, but who are ye?"

Miracles are for doctrine, and not doctrine for miracles.

But if miracles are true we cannot persuade men of all doctrine, for that will not come to pass: *Si angelus*....

Rule. We must judge of doctrine by miracles, we must judge of miracles by doctrine. All this is true, but there is no contradiction.

For we must distinguish the times.

You are glad to know general rules, thinking by that to introduce difficulties, and render all useless. We shall stop you, my good father; truth is one, and strong.

It is impossible from the duty God owes us, that a man, concealing his evil doctrine, and only allowing the good to appear, pretending that he is in conformity with God and the Church, should work miracles to insinuate insensibly a false and subtle doctrine. This cannot be.

Still less, that God who knows the heart, should work miracles in favour of such an one.

There is much difference between temptation and leading into error. God tempts, but he leads not into error. To tempt is to present occasions which impose no necessity; if we love not God we shall do a certain thing. To lead into error, is to place a man in a necessity of forming and following false conclusion.

This is what God cannot do, which nevertheless he would do, if in an obscure question he wrought miracles on the side of falsehood.

In the Old Testament, when they would turn you from God, in the New when they would turn you from Jesus Christ.

Such are the occasions on which we exclude certain miracles from credence. There need be no other exclusions.

But it does not therefore follow that they had the right to exclude all the prophets who came to them. They would have sinned in not excluding those who denied God, and would also have sinned in excluding those who denied him not.

So soon, then, as we see a miracle we should at once either acquiesce or have signal marks against it. We must see if it denies either a God, or Jesus Christ, or the Church.

Miracles avail not for conversion, but for condemnation. I P. ix. 113, a. 10, ad. 2.

Si tu es Christus, dic nobis.

Opera quæ ego facio in nomine patris mei, hæc testimonium perhibent de me.

Sed non vos creditis quia non estis ex ovibus meis. Oves mei vocem meam audiunt.

Joh. vi. 30. *Quod ergo tu facis signum ut videamus, et credamus tibi? Non dicunt: Quam doctrinam prædicas?*

Nemo potest facere signa quæ tu facis, nisi Deus fuerit cum illo.

2 Mach. xiv. 15. *Deus qui signis evidentibus suam portionem protegit.*

Volumus signum videre de cœlo tentantes eum. Luc. xi. 16.

Generatio prava signum quærit; sed non dabitur.

Et ingemiscens ait; Quid generatio ista signum quærit. Marc. viii. 12. They asked a sign with a bad intent. *Et non poterat facere.* And nevertheless he promises them the sign of Jonah, the great and incomparable evidence of his resurrection.

Nisi videritis signa non creditis. He does not blame them for not believing without there having been miracles, but without their having been themselves witnesses of them.

Antichrist *in signis mendacibus*, says St Paul. 2 Thess. ii.

Secundum operationem Satanæ. In seductione ii qui pereunt eo quod charitatem veritatis non receperunt ut salvi fierent. Ideo mittet illis Deus operationem erroris ut credant mendacia.

As in the passage of Moses: *Tentat enim vos Deus, utrum diligatis eum*.

Ecce prædixi vobis, vos ergo videte.

The Church has three kinds of enemies, the Jews, who have never been of her body; the heretics, who have withdrawn from it; and bad Christians, who rend her

from within.

These three different kinds of enemies generally assail her in different ways, but here they assail her in the same fashion. As they are all without miracles, and as the Church has always had miracles against them, they have all had the same interest in eluding them; and all avail themselves of this pretext, that we must not judge of doctrine by miracles, but of miracles by doctrine. There were two parties among those who heard Jesus Christ, those who followed his doctrine by reason of his miracles; others who said.... There were two parties in the time of Calvin. There are now the Jesuits, etc.

Miracles are the test in doubtful matters, between Jew and Gentile, Jew and Christian, catholic and heretic, slanderer and slandered, between the two crosses.

But miracles would be useless to heretics, for the Church, authorised by miracles which have already obtained credence, tells us that they have not the true faith. There is no doubt that they are not in it, because the first miracles of the Church exclude belief in theirs. Thus there is miracle against miracle, and the first and greatest are on the side of the Church.

Controversy. Abel, Cain; — Moses, the Magicians; — Elijah, the false prophets; — Jeremiah, Hananiah; — Micaiah, the false prophets; — Jesus Christ, the Pharisees; — Saint Paul, Barjesus; — the Apostles, the Exorcists; — the Christians and the infidels; — Catholics, heretics; — Elijah, Enoch, Antichrist.

In the trial by miracles truth always prevails. The two crosses.

Miracles are no longer needful, because they have already been. But when we listen no more to tradition, when the pope alone is proposed to us, when he has been taken by surprise, and when the true source of truth, which is tradition, is thus excluded, the pope, who is its guardian, is thus prejudiced, truth is no longer allowed to appear; then, since men speak no longer of truth, truth herself must speak to men. This is what happened in the time of Arius.

Religion is adapted to every kind of intellect. Some consider only its establishment, and this Religion is such that its very establishment is enough to prove its truth. Some trace it as far as the apostles; the more learned go back to the beginning of the world; the angels see it better still, and from earlier time.

1. Objection. *An angel from heaven.*

We must not judge of truth by miracles, but of miracles by truth.

Therefore miracles are useless.

Now they serve, and cannot be against the truth.

Therefore what Father Lingende says, that God will not allow a miracle to lead into error....

When there shall be a dispute in the same Church, miracle will decide.

2. Objection.

But Antichrist will work miracles.

The Magicians of Pharaoh did not lead into error. Thus on Antichrist we cannot say to Jesus Christ: You have led me into error. For Antichrist will work them against Jesus Christ, and thus they cannot lead into error. Either God will not permit false miracles, or he will procure greater.

If in the same Church a miracle should occur on the side of those in error, men would be led into error.

A schism is visible, a miracle is visible. But a schism is more a mark of error than a miracle is a mark of truth, therefore a miracle cannot lead into error.

But apart from schism the error is not so visible as the miracle is visible.

Therefore miracle may lead into error.

Ubi est Deus tuus? — Miracles show him and are a light to him.

Joh. vi. 26. *Non quia vidisti signum, sed quia saturati estis.*

Those who follow Jesus Christ because of his miracles honour his power in all the miracles which it produces. But those who, making profession to follow him because of his miracles, only follow him indeed because he consoles them and

satisfies them with worldly goods, disparage his miracles when they are contrary to their own convenience.

Joh. ix: *Non est hic homo a Deo, quia sabbatum non custodit. Alii: Quomodo potest homo peccator hæc signa facere?*

Which is the most clear?

This house is not of God, for they do not there believe that the five propositions are in Jansenius.

Others: This house is of God, for in it strange miracles are done.

Which is the most clear?

Tu quid dicis? Dico quia propheta est. — Nisi esset hic a Deo, non poterat facere quidquam.

There is much difference between not being for Jesus Christ, and saying it, and not being for Jesus Christ, yet feigning to be so. The one party can work miracles, not the others, for it is clear that the one party are against the truth, but not that the others are; and thus miracles are the more clear.

"If you believe not in me, believe at least in the miracles." He puts them forward as the strongest.

He had said to the Jews as well as to the Christians, that they should not always believe the prophets; but nevertheless the pharisees and scribes made much of his miracles, and tried to show that they were false or worked by the devil, since they were bound to be convinced, if they admitted that these were of God.

We are not in these days obliged so to discriminate. Yet it is very easy to do so; those who deny neither God nor Jesus Christ work no miracles which are not quite certain.

Nemo facit virtutem in nomine meo, et cito possit de me male loqui.

But we have not to use this discrimination. Here is a sacred relic, here is a thorn from the crown of the Saviour of the world, on whom the prince of this world has no power, which works miracles by the immediate power of the blood that was shed for us. Thus God has himself chosen this house wherein openly to show forth his power.

Here are not men who work miracles by an unknown and doubtful virtue, obliging us to a difficult discrimination; it is God himself, it is the instrument of the passion of his only Son, who being in many places chose this, and made men come from all sides, there to receive miraculous succour in their weaknesses.

If the devil were to favour the doctrine which destroys him, he would be divided against himself, as Jesus Christ said. If God favoured the doctrine which destroys the Church, he would be divided against himself. *Omne regnum divisum.*

For Jesus Christ acted against the devil, and destroyed his empire over the heart, of which exorcism is the figure, to establish the kingdom of God. And so he adds: *Si in digito Dei, regnum Dei ad vos*.

Either God has confounded the false miracles or he has foretold them, and both by the one and the other he has raised himself above the supernatural in regard to us, and has raised us also.

Jer. xxiii. 32. The *miracles* of the false prophets. In the Hebrew and Vatable they are called *trifles*.

Miracle does not always mean miracle. 1 Kings xiv. 15. *Miracle* signifies *fear*, and is the same in Hebrew.

The same plainly in Job xxxiii. 7.

So in Isaiah xxi. 4. Jeremiah xliv. 12.

Portentum means *images*, Jer. l. 38, and it is the same in Hebrew and Vatable. Isaiah viii. 18. Jesus Christ says that he and his will be in *miracles*.

Jesus Christ said that the Scriptures bear witness of him, but he did not show in what respect.

Even the prophecies could not prove Jesus Christ during his life, and thus if miracles had not sufficed without doctrine, men would not have been blameworthy who did not believe in him before his death. Now those who did not believe in him during his life were sinners, as he says himself, and without excuse. Therefore they must have resisted a conclusive proof. Now they had not our proof, but only miracles, therefore miracles are enough when doctrine is not contrary, and they ought to be believed.

John vii. 40. *Controversy among the Jews as among Christians of our day.* The one party believed in Jesus Christ, the other believed not, because of the prophecies which said he should be born in Bethlehem. They should have enquired more diligently whether he was not. For his miracles being convincing, they ought to have been quite certain of these alleged contradictions of his doctrine to the Scripture, and this obscurity did not excuse, but blinded them. Thus those who refuse to believe miracles in our day on account of an alleged but unreal contradiction, are not excused.

When the people believed on him because of his miracles, the pharisees said: "This people, which doeth not the law, is accursed, but there is none of the princes or the pharisees who has believed on him, for we know that out of Galilee ariseth no prophet." Nicodemus answered, "Doth our law judge any man before it heareth him?"

Judges xiii. 23. "If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have shewed us all these things."

Hezekiah, Sennacherib.

Jeremiah, Hananiah, the false prophet, died in seven months.

2 Macc. iii. The temple, ready for pillage, miraculously succoured. — 2 Macc. xv.

1 Kings xvii. The widow to Elijah, who had restored her son. “By this I know that thy words are true.”

1 Kings xviii. Elijah, with the prophets of Baal.

Never in a contention concerning the true God or of the truth of Religion has any miracle happened on the side of error and not of truth.

Miracle. — The people believe this of themselves, but if the reason must be given you....

It is troublesome to be an exception to the rule. We ought strictly to hold the rule and oppose the exception, yet as it is certain there are exceptions to every rule, we ought with this strictness to be just.

Is it not enough that miracles are done in one place, and that God’s providence is shown on one people?

Good breeding goes so far as to have no politeness, and true piety to have politeness for others.

This is not well bred.

The incredulous are the most credulous. They believe the miracles of Vespasian in order that they may not believe those of Moses.

On the Miracle. — As God has made no family more happy, he should also find none more grateful.

JESUITS AND JANSENISTS.



THE CHURCH HAS always been assailed by contrary errors, but perhaps never at the same time, as now; and if she suffer more because of the multiplicity of errors, she receives this advantage from it, that they destroy each other.

She complains of both, but much the most of the Calvinists, because of the schism.

It is certain that many of the two opposite parties are deceived; they must be disabused.

Faith embraces many truths which seem contradictory. *There is a time to laugh, and a time to weep, etc. Responde, ne respondeas, etc.*

The source of this is the union of the two natures in Jesus Christ.

And also the two worlds. The creation of a new heaven and a new earth, a new life, a new death, all things double, and the same names remaining.

And finally, the two natures which are in the righteous man, for they are the two worlds, and a member and image of Jesus Christ. And thus all the names suit them, righteous, sinners; dead though living, living though dead, elect, reprobate, etc.

There are then a great number of truths in faith and in morals, which seem contrary to each other, which yet all subsist together in a wonderful order.

The source of all heresies is the exclusion of some of these truths.

And the source of all the objections made by heretics against us is the ignorance of some of these truths.

And for the most part it happens that, unable to conceive the relation of two opposite truths, and believing that admission of one involves the exclusion of the other, they embrace the one and exclude the other, thinking that we on the other

hand.... Now exclusion is the cause of their heresy, and ignorance that we hold the other truth causes their objections.

1st example: Jesus Christ is God and man. The Arians, unable to reconcile these things which they believe incompatible, say that he is man, and so far they are Catholics. But they deny that he is God, and so far they are heretics. They assert that we deny his humanity, and so far they are ignorant

2nd example, on the subject of the Holy Sacrament. We believe that the substance of bread being changed, and consubstantially that of the body of our Lord Jesus Christ is therein really present. That is one truth. Another is that this sacrament is also a figure of that of the cross and of glory, and a commemoration of the two. That is the Catholic faith, which comprehends these two truths which seem opposed.

The heresy of our day, not conceiving that this sacrament contains at one and the same time both the presence of Jesus Christ and a figure of his presence, that it is a sacrifice and a commemoration of a sacrifice, believes that neither of these truths can be admitted without, by this very reason, the exclusion of the other.

They adhere to this only point, that this sacrament is figurative, and so far they are not heretics. They think that we exclude this truth, hence it comes that they found so many objections on those passages of the Fathers which assert it. Lastly they deny the presence, and so far they are heretics.

3rd example. Indulgences.

Therefore the shortest way to hinder heresies is to teach all truths, and the surest means of refuting them is to declare them all. For what will the heretics say?

If the ancient Church was in error, the Church is fallen; if she is so now it is not the same thing, for she has always the superior maxim of tradition from the hand of the ancient Church; and thus this submission and conformity to the ancient Church prevails and corrects all. But the ancient Church did not postulate the future Church, and did not regard her, as we postulate and regard the ancient.

All err the more dangerously because they follow each a truth, their fault is not that they follow an error, but that they do not follow another truth.

That which hinders us in comparing what formerly took place in the Church with what we now see, is that we are wont to regard Saint Athanasius or Saint Theresa and others as crowned with glory, and acting in regard to us as gods. Now that time has cleared our vision we see that they are so. But when this great saint was persecuted he was a man called Athanasius, and Saint Theresa was a nun. "Elias was a man like ourselves and subject to the same passions as ourselves," says Saint Peter, to disabuse Christians of that false notion that we must reject the examples of the saints as disproportioned to our state. They were saints, say we, they are not like us. What was the case then? Saint Athanasius was a man called Athanasius, accused of many crimes, condemned by such and such a council for such and such a crime. All the bishops assented to it, and at last the pope. What did they say to those who resisted his condemnation? That they were disturbing the peace, that they were creating a schism, etc.

Four lands of persons: zeal without knowledge, knowledge without zeal, neither knowledge nor zeal, zeal and knowledge. The first three condemned him, the last absolved him, were excommunicated by the Church and yet saved the Church.

The three notes of Religion: perpetuity, a good life, miracles.

They destroy perpetuity by probability, good life by their morality, miracles in destroying either their truth or their consequence.

If we believe them, the Church has nothing to do with perpetuity, a holy life, or miracles.

Heretics deny them or deny the consequences; they do the same. But those must be devoid of sincerity who deny them or again have lost their senses if they deny the consequences.

Perpetuity. — Is your character founded on Escobar?

Perhaps you have reasons for not condemning them; it is enough that you approve of those I address to you on the subject.

Would the pope be dishonoured by gaining his light from God and tradition; and does it not dishonour him to separate him from this sacred union and....

Tertullian: *Nunquam Ecclesia reformabitur.*

Perpetuity.

Molina.

Novelty.

Heretics have always assailed these three notes which they have not.

Those wretches, who have obliged me to speak on the foundations of Religion.

Sinners purified without penitence, just men sanctified without charity, all Christians without the grace of Jesus Christ, God without power over the will of men, a predestination without mystery, a redemption without certainty.

Sinners without penitence, just men without charity, a God without power over the wills of men, a predestination without mystery.

Those who love the Church complain that they see morals corrupted, but laws at least exist. But these corrupt the laws. The model is spoiled.

There is a contradiction; for on the one side they say tradition must be followed, and would not dare disavow it, and on the other they will say whatever pleases them. The former will always be believed in, and indeed it would be going against them not to believe it.

Politics. — We have found two obstacles to the design of comforting men. The one the interior laws of the Gospel, the other the exterior laws of the State and of

Religion.

We are masters of the one set of laws, the others we have dealt with in this wise: *Amplienda, restringenda, a majori ad minus.*

Junior.

Generals. — It is not enough for them to introduce such morals into our churches, *templis inducere mores*. Not only do they wish to be tolerated in the Church, but as though they had become the stronger, they would expel those who are not of them....

Mohatra. He who is astonished at this is no theologian.

Who would have told your generals that the time was so near when they would give laws to the Church universal, and would call the refusal of such disorders war, *tot et tanta mala pacem*.

They cannot have perpetuity, and they seek universality; therefore they make the whole Church corrupt, that they may be saints.

You abuse the credence which the people has in the Church, and make them believe untruth.

I suppose that men believe the miracles:

You corrupt Religion either in favour of your friends, or against your enemies. You dispose of all at your will.

So that if it be true on the one hand that some lax religious, and some corrupt casuists, who are not members of the hierarchy, are steeped in these corruptions, it is on the other hand certain that the true pastors of the Church, who are the true depositories of the divine word, have preserved it unchangeably against the efforts of those who have striven to ruin it.

And thus the faithful have no pretext to follow that laxity which is only offered them by the stranger hands of these casuists, instead of the sound doctrine which is presented to them by the fatherly hands of their own pastors. And the wicked and heretics have no reason to put forward these abuses as marks of the defective providence of God over his Church, since the Church having her true existence in the body of the hierarchy, it is so far from the present condition of things being a proof that God has abandoned her to corruption, that it has never so plainly appeared as at the present day that God visibly defends her from corruption.

For if some of these men, who by an extraordinary vocation have made profession of retirement from the world, and have adopted the religious dress, that they might live in a more perfect state than ordinary Christians, have fallen into disorders which horrify ordinary Christians, and have become among us what the false prophets were among the Jews; this is a private and personal matter, which we must indeed deplore, but from which we can conclude nothing against the care which God takes for his Church; since all these things are so clearly foretold, and it has been long since announced that temptations would arise on account of such persons, so that when we are well instructed we see therein rather the notes of the guidance of God than his forgetfulness in regard to us.

You are ignorant of the prophecies if you do not know that all this must needs happen, princes, prophets, pope, and even the priests. And yet the Church must abide. By the grace of God we are not so far gone. Woe to these priests. But we hope that God will of his mercy grant us that we be not among them.

2 Saint Peter ii. False prophets in the past the image of the future.

Is *Est and non est* received in faith as well as in miracles, and is it inseparable in the others?...

When Saint Xavier works miracles....

Saint Hilary. — These wretches who have obliged us to speak of miracles.

Væ qui conditis leges iniquas.

Unjust judges, make not your laws on the moment, judge by those which are established, and by yourselves.

To weaken your adversaries you disarm the whole Church.

If they say that our safety depends on God, they are heretics.

If they say they are under obedience to the pope, that is hypocrisy.

If they are ready to assent to all the articles, that is not enough.

If they say that no man should be killed for an apple, they assail the morality of Catholics.

If miracles are wrought among them, it is no mark of holiness, but rather a suspicion of heresy.

The hardness of the Jesuits therefore surpasses that of the Jews, since those refused to believe Jesus Christ innocent only because they doubted if his miracles were of God. But on the contrary, though the Jesuits cannot doubt that the Port Royal miracles were of God, they still continue to doubt the innocency of that house.

Men never commit evil so fully and so gaily as when they do so for conscience sake.

Experience shows us a vast difference between devoutness and goodness.

The two contrary reasons. We must begin with that; without that we understand nothing and all is heretical; in the same way we must even add at the close of each truth that the opposite truth is to be remembered.

If there was ever a time in which it were necessary to make profession of two contraries, it is when we are reproached for omitting one. Therefore the Jesuits

and the Jansenists are wrong in concealing them, but the Jansenists most, for the Jesuits have better made profession of the two.

M. de Condran. There is, he says, no comparison between the union of the saints and that of the Holy Trinity. Jesus Christ says the opposite.

That we have treated them as kindly as is possible while keeping ourselves in the mean, between the love of truth and the duty of charity.

That piety does not consist in never opposing our brethren, it would be very easy, etc.

It is false piety to keep peace to the prejudice of the truth. It is also false zeal to keep truth and wound charity.

Neither have they complained.

Their maxims have their time and place.

He will be condemned indeed who is so by Escobar.

Their vanity tends to grow out of their errors.

Conformed to the fathers by their faults, and to the martyrs by their sufferings.

Moreover they do not disavow any of....

They had only to take the passage, and disavow it.

Sanctificavi prælium.

M. Bourseys. At least they cannot disavow that they are opposed to the condemnation.

I have re-read them since, for I had not known them....

The world must be blind indeed if it believe you.

If men knew themselves, God would heal and pardon. *Ne convertantur, et sanem eos, et dimittantur eis peccata.* Isaiah. Matt. xiii.

Truth is so obscure in these days, and falsehood so established, that unless we love the truth we shall be unable to know it.

As Jesus Christ remained unknown among men, so his truth remains among ordinary opinions without external difference. Thus the Eucharist among ordinary bread. All faith consists in Jesus Christ and in Adam, and all morals in lust and in grace.

"I have reserved me seven thousand." I love the worshippers unknown to the world and even to the prophets.

To trust in forms is superstition, but to refuse to submit to forms is pride.

As peace in States has for its sole object the safe preservation of the property of the people, so the peace of the Church has for its sole object the safe preservation of truth, her property and the treasure where her heart is. And as to allow the enemy to enter into a State, and pillage without opposition, for fear of troubling repose, would be to work against the good of peace, because peace, being only just and useful for the security of property, it becomes unjust and harmful when it suffers property to be destroyed, while war in the defence of property becomes just and necessary. So in the Church, when truth is assailed by the enemies of faith, when men would tear it from the heart of the faithful, and cause error to reign there, to remain in peace is rather to betray than to serve the Church, to ruin rather than defend. And as it is plainly a crime to trouble peace where truth reigns, so is it also a crime to rest in peace when truth is destroyed. There is then a time when peace is just, and another when it is unjust. And it is written that there is a time for peace and a time for war, and it is the interest of truth to discern them. But there is not a time for truth and a time for error, and it is written, on the contrary, that the truth of God abideth for ever; and this is why Jesus Christ, who said that he came to bring peace, said also that he came to bring

war. But he did not say that he came to bring both truth and falsehood. Truth is then the first rule and the ultimate end of things.

As the two principal interests of the Church are the preservation of the piety of the faithful and the conversion of heretics, we are overwhelmed with grief at the sight of factions now arising, to introduce those errors which more than any others may close for ever against heretics the entrance into our communion, and fatally corrupt those pious and catholic persons who remain to us. This enterprise, made at the present day so openly against those truths of Religion most important for salvation, fills us not only with displeasure, but also with fear and even terror, because, besides the feeling which every Christian must have of these disorders, we have further an obligation to remedy them, and to employ the authority which God has given, to cause that the peoples which he has committed to us, etc.

We must let heretics know, who gain advantage from the doctrine of the Jesuits, that it is not that of the Church ... the doctrine of the Church, and that our divisions separate us not from the altar.

They hide themselves in the crowd, and call numbers to their aid.
Tumult.

In corrupting the bishops and the Sorbonne, if they have not had the advantage of making their judgment just, they have had that of making their judges unjust. And thus, when in future they are condemned, they will say *ad hominem* that they are unjust, and thus will refute their judgment. But that does no good. For as they cannot conclude that the Jansenists are rightly condemned because they are condemned, so they cannot conclude then that they themselves will be wrongly condemned because they will be so by corruptible judges. For their condemnation will be just, not because it will be given by judges always just, but by judges just in that particular, which will be shown by other proofs.

These are the effects of the sins of the peoples and of the Jesuits, great men have wished to be flattered, the Jesuits have wished to be loved by the great. They have all been worthy to be given up to the spirit of lying, the one party to deceive, the others to be deceived. They have been greedy, ambitious, pleasure loving: *Coacervabunt tibi magistros*.

The Jesuits.

The Jesuits have wished to unite God and the world, and have gained only the scorn of God and the world. For, on the side of conscience this is plain, and on the side of the world they are not good partisans. They have power, as I have often said, but that is in regard to other religious. They will have interest enough to get a chapel built, and to have a jubilee station, not to make appointments to bishoprics and government offices. The position of a monk in the world is a most foolish one, and that they hold by their own declaration. — Father Brisacier, the Benedictines. — Yet ... you yield to those more powerful than yourselves, and oppress with all your little credit those who have less power for intrigue in the world than you.

Venice. — What advantage will you draw from it, except the princes' need of it, and the horror the nations have had of it. If these had asked you and, in order to obtain it, had implored the assistance of all Christian princes, you might have boasted of this importunity. But not that during fifty years all the princes have exerted themselves for it in vain, and that it required such a pressing need to obtain it

If by differing we condemned, you would be right. Uniformity without diversity is useless to others, diversity without uniformity is ruinous for us. The one injures us without; the other within.

We ought to hear both parties, and on this point I have been careful.

When we have heard only one party we are always on that side, but the adverse party makes us change, whereas in this case the Jesuit confirms us.

Not what they do, but what they say.

They cry out against me only. I am content I know whom to blame for it.

Jesus Christ was a stone of stumbling.

Condemnable, condemned.

Jesus Christ never condemned without a bearing. To Judas: *Amice, ad quid venisti*? To him who had not on the wedding garment, the same.

Unless they give up probability their good maxims are as little holy as the bad. For they are founded on human authority, and thus if they are more just they will be more reasonable, but not more holy, they take after the wild stock on which they are graffed.

If what I say serves not to enlighten you, it will aid the people. — If these hold their peace, the stones will cry out.

Silence is the greatest persecution; the saints never held their peace. It is true that a vocation is needed, it is not from the decrees of the Council that we must learn whether we are called, but from the compulsion to speak. Now after Rome has spoken, and we think that she has condemned the truth, and they have written it, and the books which have said the contrary are censured; we must cry so much the louder the more unjustly we are censured, and the more violently they try to stifle speech, until there come a pope who listens to both sides, and who consults antiquity to do justice.

So good popes will find the Church still in an uproar.

The Inquisition and the Society are the two scourges of the truth.

Why do you not accuse them of Arianism? For if they have said that Jesus Christ is God, perhaps it is not with a natural meaning, but as it is said: *Dii estis*.

If my Letters are condemned at Rome, what I condemn in them is condemned in heaven.

Ad tuum, Domine Jesu, tribunal appello.

You are yourselves corruptible.

I feared that I had written ill when I saw myself condemned, but the example of so many pious writings makes me believe the contrary. Good writing is no longer permitted, so corrupt or ignorant is the Inquisition.

It is better to obey God than men.

I have neither fear nor hope. Not so the bishops. Port Royal fears, and it is a bad policy to dissolve the community, for they will fear no longer and will inspire greater fear.

I fear not even your censures, ... if they be not founded on those of tradition.

Do you censure all? What, even my respect? — No. — Say then, what it is, or you will do nothing, since you do not point out the evil, and why it is evil. And this is what they will have some trouble to do.

Unjust persecutors of those whom God visibly protects.

If they reproach you with your excesses they speak as do the heretics.

If they say that the grace of Jesus Christ separates us, they are heretics.

If miracles are wrought, it is the mark of their heresy.

Ezekiel,

They say, these are the people of God who thus speak.

Hezekiah,

My reverend father, all this was done in figures. Other religions perish, this one perishes not.

Miracles are more important than you think, they have served for the foundation, and will serve for the continuance of the Church till the coming of Antichrist, till the end.

The two witnesses.

In the Old Testament and the New, miracles are wrought in connection with types. Salvation or an useless thing, if not to show that we must submit to the creature. — Figure of the sacraments.

The synagogue was a figure and so it perished not, and it was only the figure and so it has perished. It was a figure which contained the truth, and so it subsisted till it contained the truth no longer.

The exaggerated notion which you have of the importance of your society has made you establish these horrible ways. It is very plain that it has made you follow the way of slander, since you blame in me as horrible the same impostures which you excuse in yourselves, because you regard me as a private person, and yourselves as *imago*.

It plainly appears that your praises are follies, by those which are crazy, as the privilege of the uncondemned.

Is this giving courage to your children to condemn them when they serve the Church?

It is an artifice of the devil to turn in another direction the arms with which these people used to combat heresies.

You are bad politicians.

The history of the man born blind.

What says Saint Paul? Does he constantly speak of the bearing of prophecies? No, but of his miracles.

What says Jesus Christ? Does he expound the bearing of the prophecies? No, his death had not fulfilled them; but he says, si non fecissem: believe the works.

Si non fecissem quæ alius non fecit.

These wretches who have obliged us to speak of miracles!

Abraham and Gideon confirmed faith by miracles.

There are two supernatural foundations of our wholly supernatural Religion, the one visible, the other invisible.

Miracles with grace, miracles without grace.

The synagogue, which has been treated with love as a figure of the Church, and with hatred because it was only the figure, has been restored, being about to fall when it was well with God, and thus a figure.

The miracles prove the power which God has over hearts by that which he exercises over the body.

The Church has never approved a miracle among heretics.

Miracles are a support of religion. They have been the test of Jews, of Christians, of saints, of innocents, and of true believers.

A miracle among schismatics is not much to be feared, for schism which is more evident than miracle, evidently marks their error; but when there is no schism, and error is in question, miracle is the test.

Judith. God speaks at length in their extreme oppression.

If because charity has grown cold the Church is left almost without true worshippers, miracles will raise them up.

This is one of the last effects of grace.

If only a miracle were wrought among the Jesuits!

When a miracle deceives the expectation of those in whose presence it occurs, and when there is a disproportion between the state of their faith and the instrument of the miracle it must lead them to change; but with you it is the opposite. There would be as much reason in saying that if the Eucharist raised a dead man one ought to turn Calvinist rather than remain a Catholic. But when he crowns the expectation, and those who have hoped that God would bless the remedies see themselves cured without remedies....

The wicked. — No sign was ever given on the part of the devil without a stronger sign on the part of God, at least unless it were foretold that this would be so.

These nuns, amazed at what is said, that they are in the way of perdition, that their confessors are leading them to Geneva, and teach them Jesus Christ is not in the Eucharist, nor on the right hand of the Father, know all this to be false, and offer then themselves to God in that state. *Vide si via iniquitatis in me est.* What happens thereupon? The place, which is said to be the temple of the devil, God makes his own temple. It is said that the children must be taken away, God heals them there. It is said to be hell's arsenal, God makes of it the sanctuary of his graces. Lastly, they are threatened with all the furies and all the vengeance of heaven, and God loads them with favours. Those must have lost their senses, who therefore believe them in the way of perdition. — *We have, without doubt, the same tokens as Saint Athanasius.* —

The five propositions were equivocal; they are so no longer.

With so many other signs of piety they have that of persecution also, which is the best mark of piety.

By showing the truth we gain belief for it, but by showing the injustice of ministers, we do not correct it. Conscience is made secure by a demonstration of falsehood; our purse is not made secure by the demonstration of injustice.

Miracles and truth are both needful, as we have to convince the whole man, body and soul alike.

It is good that their deeds should be unjust, for fear it should not appear that the Molinists have acted justly. Thus there is no need to spare them, they are worthy to commit them.

The Church, the Pope. — Unity, plurality. Considering the Church as unity, the pope its head, is as the whole; considered as plurality, the pope is only a part of it. The Fathers have considered the Church now in this way, now in that, and thus they have spoken in divers ways of the pope.

Saint Cyprian, *sacerdos Dei*.

But in establishing one of these two truths, they have not excluded the other.

Plurality which cannot be reduced to unity is confusion. Unity which depends not on plurality is tyranny.

There is scarce any where left but France in which it is allowable to say that a council is below the pope.

We may not judge of what the pope is by some words of the Fathers — as the Greeks said in a council, important rules — but by the acts of the Church and the Fathers, and by the canons.

Unity and plurality: *Duo aut tres in unum*. It is an error to exclude one of the two, as the papists do who exclude plurality, or the Huguenots who exclude unity.

The pope is chief, who else is known of all, who else is recognised by all? Having power to insinuate himself into all the body, because he holds the leading shoot, which extends itself everywhere.

How easy to cause this to degenerate into tyranny. This is why Jesus Christ has laid down for them this precept: *Vos autem non sic*.

God works not miracles in the ordinary conduct of his Church. It would be a strange miracle, did infallibility reside in one, but that it should dwell in a multitude appears so natural that the ways of God are concealed under nature, as all his other works.

Men desire certainty, they like the pope to be infallible in faith, grave doctors to be infallible in morals, in order to have certainty.

The pope hates and fears men of science, who are not at once submissive to him.

Kings are masters of their own power, not so the popes.

Whenever the Jesuits take the pope unawares, they will make all Christendom perjured.

It is very easy to take the pope unawares, because of his occupations, and the trust which he has in the Jesuits, and the Jesuits are very capable of taking him unawares by means of calumny.

The five propositions condemned, yet no miracle, for truth was not attacked, but the Sorbonne and the bull.

It is impossible that those who love God with all their heart, should misunderstand the Church, which is so evident.

It is impossible that those who love not God should be convinced of the Church.

Let us look to the discourses on the 2nd, 4th, and 5th of the Jansenist. They are lofty and grave.

We would not make a friend of either.

The ear only is consulted because the heart is wanting.

Beauty of omission, of judgment.

The rule is that of honourable conduct.

Poet and not honourable man.

These men want heart.

We would not make a friend of him.

For this name of honourable man.

Canonical. — The heretical books in the early age of the Church serve to prove the canonical.

Heretics. — Ezekiel. All the heathens spake evil of Israel, and the Prophet did the same, yet the Israelites were so far from having a right to say to him, "You speak as the heathen," that he made it his strongest point that the heathens said the same as he.

Those are feeble souls who know the truth, and uphold it only so far as their interest is concerned, but beyond that abandon it.

Annat. He makes the disciple without ignorance, and the master without presumption.

There is such great disproportion between the merit which he thinks he has and his stupidity, that it is hard to believe he mistakes himself so completely.

And will this one scorn the other?
Who should scorn? Yet he scorns not the other, but pities him.

Port Royal is surely as good as Voltigerod.
So far as your proceeding is just according to this bias, so far is it unjust on the side of Christian piety.

Montalte. — Lax opinions are so pleasing to men, that it is strange that theirs displease. It is because they have exceeded all bounds; and more, there are many persons who see the truth, yet cannot attain to it; but there are few who do not know that the purity of religion is contrary to our corruptions. It is absurd to say that eternal reward is offered to the morals of Escobar.

But is it *probable* that *probability* gives certainty? — Difference between rest and security of conscience. Nothing but truth gives certainty. Nothing gives rest but a sincere search after truth.

Probability. They have oddly explained certainty, for after having established that all their ways are sure, they no longer call that sure which leads to heaven without danger of not arriving thereby, but that which leads there without danger of going out of the road.

Now probability is necessary for the other maxims, as for that of the friend and the slanderer.

A fructibus eorum, judge of their faith by their morals.

Probability is little without corrupt means, and means are nothing without probability.

There is pleasure in being able to do good, and in knowing how to do good, *scire et posse*. Grace and probability give this pleasure, for we can render our account to God in reliance upon their authors.

Probability.

Everyone can impose it, none can take it away.

Probable. — If as bad reasons as these are probable, all would be so.

1. Reason. *Dominus actuum conjugalium.* Molina.

2. Reason. *Non potest compensari.* Lessius.

To oppose not with holy, but with abominable maxims.

They reason as those who prove that it is night at midday.

Bauny, the burner of barns.

... The Council of Trent for priests in mortal sin: *quam primum*....

Probable. — Let us see if we seek God sincerely, by the comparison of things we love.

It is probable that this meat will not poison me.

It is probable that I shall not lose my law suit if I do not bring it.

If it were true that grave authors and reasons would suffice, I say that they are neither grave nor reasonable. What! a husband may make profit of his wife according to Molina. Is the reason he gives reasonable, and the contrary one of Lessius reasonable also?

Would you dare thus to trifle with the edicts of the King, as by saying that to go for a walk in a field and wait for a man is not to fight a duel;

That the Church has indeed forbidden duelling, but not taking a walk?

And usury too, but not....

And simony, but not....

And vengeance, but not....

And unnatural crime, but not....

And *quam primum*, but not....

Take away *probability*, and you can no longer please the world, give *probability*, and you can no longer displease it.

Universal. — Morals and language are special but universal sciences.

Probability. — The zeal of the saints to seek the truth, was useless if the probable is certain.

The fear of the saints who have always followed the surest way.

Saint Theresa having always followed her confessor.

Probability. — They have some true principles, but they abuse them. Now the abuse of truth should be as much punished as the introduction of falsehood.

As if there were two hells, one for sins against charity, the other for sins against justice.

Men who do not keep their word, without faith, without honour, without truth, double hearted, double tongued, like the reproach once flung at that amphibious

creature in the fable, who kept itself in a doubtful position between the fish and the birds.

It is of importance to kings and princes to be supposed pious, and therefore they must take you for their confessors.

State super vias et interrogate de semitis antiquis, et ambulate in eis. Et dixerunt: Non ambulabimus, sed post cogitationem nostram ibimus. They have said to the nations: Come to us, we will follow the opinions of the new authors, reason shall be our guide, we will be as the other nations who follow each their natural light. Philosophers have....

All religions and sects in the world have had natural reason for a guide. Christians alone have been obliged to take their rules from without themselves, and to acquaint themselves with those which Jesus Christ left to men of old time to be transmitted to the faithful. This constraint is wearisome to these good fathers. They desire like the rest of the world to have liberty to follow their imaginations. In vain we cry to them, as the prophets to the Jews of old: "Enter into the Church, enquire of the ways which men of old have left to her, and follow those paths." They have answered, as did the Jews, "We will not walk in them, but we will follow the thoughts of our hearts;" and they have said, "We will be as the nations round about us."

Can it be any thing but the desire to please the world which makes you find things probable? Will you make us believe that it is truth, and that if duelling were not the fashion, you would find it probable they might fight, looking at the matter in itself?

The whole society of their casuists cannot give assurance to a conscience in error, and therefore it is important to choose safe guides.

Thus they will be doubly guilty, both in having followed ways which they should not follow, and in having hearkened to teachers to whom they should not

hearken.

Casuists submit the decision to corrupt reason, and the choice of decisions to corrupt will, so that all that is corrupt in the nature of man may help to rule his conduct.

They allow lust free play, and restrict scruples, whereas they should do the exact contrary.

Must we slay in order that the wicked may cease to be? This is to make two wicked instead of one. *Vince in bono malum.* Saint Augustine.

The servant does not know what the master does, for the master tells him only the act and not the purpose; this is why he is so often slavishly obedient and often sins against the purpose. But Jesus Christ tells us the purpose.

And you destroy this purpose.

Art thou less a slave because thy master loves and caresses thee? Thou art indeed well off, slave. Thy master caresses thee, he will presently beat thee.

Those who wrote thus in Latin speak in French.

The evil having been done of patting these things in French, we ought to do the good of condemning them.

There is one only heresy, which is differently explained in the schools and in the world.

On confessions and absolutions without signs of regret. God looks at the heart alone, the Church looks at outward actions; God absolves as soon as he sees penitence in the heart, the Church when she sees it in works. God will make a

Church pure within, which puts to confusion by its interior and perfect spiritual holiness the interior impiety of proud philosophers and Pharisees, and the Church will make an assembly of men whose external morals are so pure that they put to confusion heathen morals. If some are hypocrites, but so well disguised that she does not recognise their venom, she bears with them, for though they are not accepted of God, whom they cannot deceive, they are of men, whom they deceive. And thus she is not dishonoured by their conduct which appears holy. But you will have it that the Church should judge neither of the heart, for that belongs to God alone, nor of works, because God looks at the heart alone; and so taking away from her all choice of men, you retain in the Church the most debauched and those who so greatly dishonour her, that the synagogues of the Jews and the sects of the philosophers would have cast them out as unworthy, and have abhorred them as impious.

God has not willed to absolve without the Church. As she has part in the offence he wills that she should have part in the pardon. He associates her with this power as kings their parliaments; but if she binds or looses without God, she is no more the Church, as in the case of parliament. For even if the king have pardoned a man, it is necessary that it should be ratified; but if the parliament ratifies without the king, or refuses to ratify on the order of the king, it is no more the parliament of the king, but a revolutionary body.

The Church teaches and God inspires, both infallibly. The operation of the Church serves only to prepare for grace or for condemnation. What it does suffices for condemnation, not for inspiration.

The Church has in vain established these words, anathema, heresies. They are used against herself.

It is not absolution only which remits sins by the Sacrament of Penance, but contrition, which is not a true contrition if it does not frequent the sacrament.

Thus, again, it is not the nuptial benediction which hinders sin in generation, but the desire of begetting children for God, which is no true desire except in marriage.

And as a contrite man without the sacrament is more disposed for absolution than an impenitent man with the sacrament, so the daughters of Lot, for instance, who had only the desire for children, were more pure without marriage than married persons without desire for children.

Casuists. — Much almsgiving, reasonable penance; even when we cannot assign what is just, we see plainly what is not. It is strange that casuists believe they can interpret this as they do.

People who accustom themselves to speak ill and to think ill.

Their great number, far from marking their perfection, marks the contrary.

The humility of one makes the pride of many.

They make a rule of the exception. If the ancient fathers gave absolution before penance; do this only as an exception. But of the exception you make a rule without exception, so that you will not even have it that the rule is exceptional.

Priest still who will, as under Jeroboam.

It is a horrible thing that they submit to us the discipline of the Church in our days as so excellent that it is made a crime to wish to change it Formerly it was infallibly good, and it was found it might be changed without sin, and now, such as it is, we ought not to wish it changed!

It has indeed been allowed to change the custom of not making priests save with such great circumspection, that there were scarcely any who were worthy, yet we are not allowed to complain of the custom which makes so many who are unworthy.

Two sorts of people place things on the same level, as feasts and working days, Christians and priests, all sins among themselves, etc. Therefore the one set conclude that what is bad for priests is so for Christians, and the other that what is not bad for Christians is permissible for priests.

The Jansenists are like the heretics in the reformation of their morals, but you are like them in evil.

Superstition to believe propositions, etc.
Faith, etc.

If Saint Augustine came at this day, and was as little authorised as his defenders, he would do nothing. God governs his Church well, in that he sent him before with authority.

Grace is needed to make a man into a saint, and if any man doubt this he knows not what is a saint, nor what is a man.

The motions of grace, hardness of heart, external circumstances.

Grace will ever be in the world, and nature also, so that grace is in some sort natural. Thus there will be always Pelagians, always Catholics, always strife.
Because the first birth constitutes the one, and the grace of regeneration the other.

It will be one of the confusions of the damned to see themselves condemned by their own reason, by which they have thought to condemn the Christian religion.

When it is said that Jesus Christ died not for all, you take advantage of a defect inherent in men who immediately apply this exception to themselves, which is to favour despair instead of turning men from it to favour hope. For so we accustom ourselves to interior virtues by exterior customs.

There is heresy in always explaining omnes by 'all,' and heresy in not explaining it sometimes by 'all.' *Bibite ex hoc omnes*, the Huguenots are heretics in explaining it by 'all.' *In quo omnes peccaverunt*, the Huguenots are heretics in excepting the children of the faithful. We must then follow the Fathers and tradition to know when to do so, since there is heresy to be feared on one side or the other.

A point of form. — When Saint Peter and the apostles consulted about the abolition of circumcision, when it was a question of acting in contradiction to the law of God, they did not consult the prophets, but considered simply the reception of the Holy Spirit in the persons uncircumcised. They judged it more certain that God approved those whom he filled with his spirit, than it was that the law must be observed.

They knew that the end of the Law was none other than the Holy Spirit, and thus as men certainly had this without circumcision, circumcision was not needful.

But to preserve pre-eminence to himself he gives prayer to whom he pleases.

Why God has established prayer.

1. To communicate to his creatures the dignity of causality.
2. To teach us from whom our virtue comes.
3. To make us deserve other virtues by work.

Objection. But we believe that prayer comes from ourselves.

This is absurd, for since before we have faith, we cannot have virtues, how should we have faith? Is there a greater distance between infidelity and faith than

between faith and virtue?

Merit. This word is ambiguous.

Meruit habere Redemptorem.

Meruit tam sacra membra tangere.

Digna tam sacra membra tangere.

Non sum dignus, qui manducat indignus.

Dignus est accipere.

Dignare me.

God is only bound according to his promises.

He has promised to do justice to prayer, he has never promised prayer only to the children of promise.

Si does not mark indifference. Malachi, Isaiah.

Isaiah. *Si volumus*, etc.

In quacumque die.

Ne timeas, pusillus grex. Timore et tretmore. — Quid ergo? Ne timeas, modo timeas.

Fear not, provided you fear, but if you fear not, then fear.

Qui me recipit, non me recipit, sed eum qui me misit.

Nemo scit neque Filius.

Nubes lucida obumbravit.

Saint John was to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and Jesus Christ was to sow division. In this there is no contradiction.

The effects *in communi* and *in particulari*. The semi-Pelagians err in saying of *in communi* what is true only *in particulari*, and the Calvinists in saying *in particulari* what is true *in communi*. So it seems to me.

Saint Augustine has said expressly that power would be taken away from the righteous. But it is by chance that he said it, for it might have been that the chance of saying it did not occur. But his principles make us see that when the occasion for it presented itself, it was impossible he should not say so, or that he should say anything to the contrary. It is then rather that he was forced to say it, when the occasion offered itself, than that he said it, the occasion having offered itself, the one being of necessity, the other of chance. But the two are all that we could ask.

The end. Are we certain? Is this principle certain? Let us examine.

The testimony of a man's self is naught Saint Thomas.

The image alone of all these mysteries has been openly showed to the Jews and by Saint John the forerunner, and then the other mysteries, to mark that in each man as in the world at large this order must be observed.

It is, in technical language, *wholly* the body of Jesus Christ, but it cannot be said to be the *whole* body of Jesus Christ.

The union of two things without change cannot enable us to say that one becomes the other.

Thus the soul is united to the body, the fire to the fuel, without change.

But change is necessary to make the form of the one become the form of the other.

Thus the union of the Word to man.

Because my body without my soul would not make the body of a man, then my soul united to any matter whatsoever would make my body.

It distinguishes for me the necessary condition with a sufficient condition, the union is necessary, but not sufficient.

The left arm is not the right.

Impenetrability is a property of matter.

Identity of number in regard to the same time requires the identity of matter.

Thus if God united my soul to a body in China, the same body, *idem numero* would be in China.

The same river which runs there is *idem numero* as that which runs at the same time in China.

THOUGHTS ON STYLE.



ELOQUENCE IS AN art of saying things in such a manner, 1, that those to whom we speak can hear them without pain, and with pleasure; 2, that they feel themselves interested, so that self-love leads them more willingly to reflect upon what is said. It consists therefore in a correspondence which we endeavour to establish between the mind and the heart of those to whom we speak on the one hand, and, on the other, the thoughts and the expressions employed; this supposes that we have thoroughly studied the heart of man so as to know all its springs, and to find at last the true proportions of the discourse we wish to suit to it. We should put ourselves in the place of those who are to listen to us, and make experiment on our own heart of the turn we give to our discourse, to see whether one is made for the other, and whether we can be sure that our auditor will be as it were forced to yield. So far as possible we must confine ourselves to what is natural and simple, not aggrandise that which is little, or belittle that which is great. It is not enough that a phrase be beautiful, it must be fitted to the subject, and not have in it excess or defect.

Eloquence is painted thought, and thus those who, after having painted it, add somewhat more, make a picture, not a portrait.

Eloquence. — We need both what is pleasing and what is real, but that which pleases must itself be drawn from the true.

Eloquence, which persuades by gentleness, not by empire, as a tyrant, not as a king.

There is a certain pattern of charm and beauty which consists in a certain relation between our nature, such as it is, whether weak or strong, and the thing which pleases us.

Whatever is formed on this pattern delights us, whether house, song, discourse, verse, prose, woman, birds, rivers, trees, rooms, dresses, etc.

Whatever is not made on this pattern displeases those who have good taste.

And as there is a perfect relation between a song and a house which are made on a good pattern, because they are like this unique pattern, though each after its kind, there is also a perfect relation between things made on a bad pattern. Not that the bad is unique, for there are many; but every bad sonnet, for instance, on whatever false pattern it is constructed, is exactly like a woman dressed on that pattern.

Nothing makes us understand better the absurdity of a false sonnet than to consider nature and the pattern, and then to imagine a woman or a house constructed on that pattern.

When a natural discourse paints a passion or an effect, we feel in our mind the truth of what we read, which was there before, though we did not know it, and we are inclined to love him who makes us feel it. For he has not made a display of his own riches, but of ours, and thus this benefit renders him pleasant to us, besides that such a community of intellect necessarily inclines the heart to love.

All the false beauties which we blame in Cicero have their admirers and in great number.

The last thing we decide on in writing a book is what shall be the first we put in it.

Language. — We ought not to turn the mind from one thing to another save for relaxation, at suitable times, and no other, for he that diverts out of season

wearies, and he who wearies us out of season repels us, and we simply turn away. So much it pleases our wayward lust to do the exact contrary of what those seek to obtain from us who give us no pleasure, the coin for which we will do whatever we are asked.

When we meet with a natural style, we are charmed and astonished, for we looked for an author, and we found a man. But those who have good taste, and who seeing a book expect to find a man, are altogether surprised to find an author: *plus poetice quam humane locatus es*. Those pay great honour to nature, who show her that she is able to discourse on all things, even on theology.

Languages are ciphers, where letters are not changed into letters, but words into words, so that an unknown language can be deciphered.

When in a discourse we find words repeated, and in trying to correct them find we cannot change them for others without manifest disadvantage, we must let them stand, for this is the true test; our criticism came of envy which is blind, and does not see that repetition is not in this place a fault, for there is no general rule.

Miscellaneous. Language. — Those who force words for the sake of antitheses are like those who make false windows for symmetry.

Their rule is not to speak accurately, but in accurate form.

To put a mask on nature and disguise her. No more King, pope, bishop, but *sacred majesty*, no more Paris, but *the capital of the Kingdom*.

There are places in which we should call Paris, Paris, and others in which we ought to call it the capital of the Kingdom.

There are those who speak well and write ill. Because the place and the audience warm them, and draw from their minds more than would have been

produced without that warmth.

Miscellaneous. — A figure of speech, "I should have wished to apply myself to that."

The *aperitive* virtue of a key, the *attractive* virtue of a crook.

To guess. *The part that I take in your sorrow.* The Cardinal did not choose to be guessed.

My mind is disquieted within me. I am disquieted is better.

To extinguish the torch of sedition, too luxuriant.

The restlessness of his genius. Two striking words too much.

A coach *upset* or *overturned*, according to the meaning.

Spread abroad, or *upset*, according to the meaning.

The argument by force of M. le M. over the friar.

Symmetry.

Is what we see at one glance.

Founded on the fact that there is no reason for any difference.

And founded also on the face of man.

Whence it comes that symmetry is only wanted in breadth, not in height or depth.

Sceptic, for obstinate.

Descartes useless and uncertain.

No one calls another a courtier but he who is not one himself, a pedant save a pedant, a provincial but a provincial, and I would wager it was the printer who put it on the title of *Letters to a Provincial*.

The chief talent, that which rules all others.

If the lightning were to strike low-lying places, etc., poets, and those whose only reasonings are on things of that nature would lack proofs.

Poetical beauty. — As we talk of poetical beauty, so ought we to talk of mathematical beauty and medical beauty; yet we do not use those terms, because we know perfectly the object of mathematics, that it consists in proofs, and the object of medicine, that it consists in healing, but we do not understand wherein consists charm which is the object of poetry. We do not know what is the natural model to be imitated, and for want of that knowledge we invent a set of extravagant terms, "*the golden age*, *the wonder of our times*, *fatal*," etc., and fall this jargon poetic beauty.

But if we imagine a woman on that pattern, which consists in saying little things in great words, we shall see a pretty girl bedecked with mirrors and chains absurd to our taste, because we know better wherein consists the charm of woman than the charm of verse. But those who do not know, would admire her in such trimmings, and in many villages she would be taken for the queen, wherefore sonnets made on such a pattern have been called *The Village Queens*.

Those who judge of a work without rule are in regard to others as those who possess a watch are in regard to others. One says, "it was two hours ago," another, "it is only three-quarters of an hour." I look at my watch and say to the one, "you are weary of us," and to the other, "time flies fast with you, for it is only an hour and a half." And I laugh at those who say that time goes slowly with me, and that I judge by fancy. They do not know that I judge by my watch.

VARIOUS THOUGHTS.



Mathematics, Tact. — True eloquence makes light of eloquence, true morality makes light of morality, that is to say, the morality of the judgment makes light of the morality of the intellect, which has no rules.

For perception belongs to judgment, as science belongs to the intellect. Tact is the part of judgment, mathematics of the intellect.

To make light of philosophy is to be a true philosopher.

The nourishment of the body is little by little, too much nourishment gives little substance.

There is an universal and essential difference between the actions of the will and all others.

The will is one of the principal organs of belief, not that it forms belief, but because things are true or false according to the side from which we regard them. The will, pleased with one rather than the other, turns the mind from the consideration of that which has the qualities it cares not to see, and thus the intellect, moving with the will, stays to regard the side it loves, and thus judges by what it sees.

The heart has its reasons, which reason knows not, as we feel in a thousand instances. I say that the heart loves the universal Being naturally, and itself naturally, according as it gives itself to each, and it hardens itself against one or the other at its own will. You have rejected one and kept the other, does reason cause your love?

It is the heart which is conscious of God, not the reason. This then is faith; God sensible to the heart, not to the reason.

Reason acts slowly and with so many views, on so many principles, which it ought always to keep before it, that it constantly slumbers and goes astray, from not having its principles at hand. The heart does not act thus, it acts in a moment, and is always ready to act. We must then place our faith in the heart, or it will be always vacillating.

Men often mistake their imagination for their heart, and they believe they are converted as soon as they think of being converted.

Those who are accustomed to judge by the heart do not understand the process of reasoning, for they wish to understand at a glance, and are not accustomed to seek for principles. And others on the contrary, who are accustomed to reason by principles, do not at all understand the things of the heart, seeking principles and not being able to see at a glance.

If we wished to prove those examples by which we prove other things, we should have to take those other things to be examples. For as we always believe the difficulty is in the matter we wish to prove, we find the examples clearer and aids to demonstration.

Thus when we wish to demonstrate a general proposition, we must give the rule special to a case, but if we wish to demonstrate a particular case, we must begin with the particular rule. For we always find the thing obscure which we wish to prove, and that clear which we employ as proof; for when a matter is proposed for proof we first fill ourselves with the imagination that it is therefore obscure, and on the contrary that what is to prove it is clear, and so we understand with ease.

Far from believing a thing because you have heard it, you ought to believe nothing without having put yourself in the same position as if you had never

heard it.

What should make you believe is your own assent to yourself, and the constant voice of your reason, not that of others.

Belief is so important!

A hundred contradictions might be true.

If antiquity were the rule of faith then the men of old time had no rule. If general consent, if men had perished....

False humility is pride.

Lift the curtain.

You may try as you please. You must either believe, or deny, or doubt.

Have we then no rule?

We judge that animals do well what they do. Is there no rule whereby to judge men?

To deny, to believe, and to doubt well are to a man what paces are to a horse.

Memory is necessary for every operation of the reason.

Memory and joy are feelings, and even mathematical propositions become so, for reason makes what is felt natural, and natural feelings are effaced by reason.

All our reasoning is reduced to yielding to feeling.

But fancy is like yet contrary to feeling, so that we cannot distinguish between these contraries. One man says that my feeling is fancy, another that his fancy is feeling. We must have a rule. Reason offers herself, but she is pliable in all directions, and so there is no rule.

Reason commands us much more imperiously than a master, for in disobeying the one we are unhappy, and in disobeying the other we are fools.

When we are accustomed to use bad reasons for proving natural effects, we do not wish to receive good reasons even when they are discovered. An example may be taken from the circulation of the blood, to give a reason why the vein swells below the ligature.

We are usually better persuaded by reasons which we have ourselves discovered, than by those which have come into the mind of others.

M. de Roannez said: “Reasons come afterwards, but at first a thing pleases or shocks me, without my knowing the reason, and yet it displeased me for the reason which I only discover later.” But I believe, not that he was displeased for those reasons which he afterwards discovered, but that those reasons were only discovered because the thing was displeasing.

The difference between the mathematical mind and the practical mind. — In the one the premisses are palpable, but removed from ordinary use, so that from want of habit it is difficult to look in that direction, but if we take the trouble to look, the premisses are fully visible, and we must have a totally incorrect mind if we draw wrong inferences from premisses so plain that it is scarce possible they should escape our notice.

But in the practical mind the premisses are taken from use and wont, and are before the eyes of every body. We have only to look that way, there is no difficulty in seeing them; it is only a question of good eyesight, but it must be good, for the premisses are so numerous and so subtle, that it is scarce possible but that some escape us. Now the omission of one premiss leads to error, thus we must have very clear sight to see all the premisses, and then an accurate mind not to draw false conclusions from known premisses.

All mathematicians would then be practical if they were clear-sighted, for they do not reason incorrectly on premisses known to them. And practical men would

be mathematicians if they could turn their eyes to the premisses of mathematics to which they are unaccustomed.

The reason therefore that some practical men are not mathematical is that they cannot at all turn their attention to mathematical premisses. But the reason that mathematicians are not practical is that they do not see what is before them, and that, accustomed to the precise and distinct statements of mathematics and not reasoning till they have well examined and arranged their premisses, they are lost in practical life wherein the premisses do not admit of such arrangement, being scarcely seen, indeed they are felt rather than seen, and there is great difficulty in causing them to be felt by those who do not of themselves perceive them. They are so nice and so numerous, that a very delicate and very clear sense is needed to apprehend them, and to judge rightly and justly when they are apprehended, without as a rule being able to demonstrate them in an orderly way as in mathematics; because the premisses are not before us in the same way, and because it would be an infinite matter to undertake. We must see them at once, at one glance, and not by process of reasoning, at least up to a certain degree. And thus it is rare that mathematicians are practical, or that practical men are mathematicians, because mathematicians wish to treat practical life mathematically; and they make themselves ridiculous, wishing to begin by definitions and premisses, a proceeding which this way of reasoning will not bear. The mind does indeed the same thing, but tacitly, naturally and without art, in a way which none can express, and only a few can feel.

Practical minds on the contrary, being thus accustomed to judge at a glance, are amazed when propositions are presented to them of which they understand nothing and the way to which is through sterile definitions and premisses, which they are not accustomed to see thus in detail, and therefore are repelled and disheartened.

But inaccurate minds are never either practical or mathematical. Mathematicians who are only mathematicians have exact minds, provided all things are clearly set before them in definitions and premisses, otherwise they are

inaccurate and intolerable, for they are only accurate when the premisses are perfectly clear.

And practical men, who are only practical, cannot have the patience to condescend to first principles of things speculative and abstract, which they have never seen in the world, and to which they are wholly unaccustomed.

There are various kinds of good sense, there are some who judge correctly in a certain order of things, and are lost in others.

Some are able to draw conclusions well from a few premisses, and this shows a penetrative intellect.

Others draw conclusions well where there are many premisses.

For instance, the first easily understand the laws of hydrostatics, where the premisses are few, but the conclusions so nice, that only the greatest penetration can reach them. And these persons would perhaps not necessarily be great mathematicians, because mathematics embrace a great number of premisses, and perhaps a mind may be so formed that it searches with ease a few premisses to the bottom, yet cannot at all comprehend those matters in which there are many premisses.

There are then two kinds of mind, the one able to penetrate vigorously and deeply into the conclusions of certain premisses, and these are minds true and just. The other able to comprehend a great number of premisses without confusion, and these are the minds for mathematics. The one kind has force and exactness, the other capacity. Now the one quality can exist without the other, a mind may be vigorous and narrow, or it may have great range and no strength.

When we do not know the truth of a thing, it is not amiss that there should be a common error to fix the mind of men, as for instance the moon, to which is attributed the change of seasons, the progress of diseases, etc. For the principal malady of man is that restless curiosity about matters which he can not understand, and it is not so bad for him to be mistaken, as to be so idly curious.

The way in which Epictetus, Montaigne, and Salomon de Tultie wrote, is the most usual, the most insinuating, the most easily remembered, and the most often quoted; because it is wholly composed of thoughts which arise out of the ordinary conversations of life. As when a man speaks of the vulgar error that the moon is the cause of all, we never fail to say that Salomon de Tultie says, that when we know not the truth of a matter, it is well there should be a common error, etc; which is the thought above.

To write against those who plunged too deep into science. Descartes.

Descartes.

We must say in general: "This is made by figure and motion for it is true." But to say what these are, and to compose the machine, is ridiculous, for it is useless, uncertain, and painful. And if it were true we do not think that all philosophy is worth one hour of pain.

I cannot forgive Descartes.

If an animal did by mind what it does by instinct, and if it spoke by mind what it speaks by instinct, in hunting, and warning its companions that the quarry is found or lost, it would certainly also speak in regard to those things which affect it more strongly, as for instance, "Gnaw me this cord which hurts me, and which I cannot reach."

The story of the pike and frog of Liancourt. They do it always and never otherwise, nor any other thing of mind.

The calculating machine works results which approach nearer to thought than any thing done by animals, but it does nothing which enables us to say it has any will, as animals have.

When it is said that heat is only the motion of certain molecules, and light the *conatus recedendi* which we feel, we are surprised. And shall we think that pleasure is but the buoyancy of our spirits? We have conceived so different an idea of it, and these sensations seem so removed from those others which we say are the same as those with which we compare them. The feeling of fire, the warmth which affects us in a manner wholly different from touch, the reception of sound and light, all this seems to us mysterious, and yet it is as material as the blow of a stone. It is true that the minuteness of the spirits which enter into the pores touch different nerves, yet nerves are always touched.

What is more absurd than to say that inanimate bodies have passion, fear, horror, that insensible bodies, without life, and even incapable of life, have passions, which presuppose at least a sensitive soul to feel them, nay more, that the object of their terror is a vacuum? What is there in a vacuum which should make them afraid? What can be more base and more ridiculous? Nor is this all; it is said they have in themselves a principle of motion to avoid a vacuum. Have they arms, legs, muscles, nerves?

How foolish is painting, which draws admiration by the resemblance of things of which we do not admire the originals.

In the same way that we injure the understanding we injure the feelings also.

The feelings and the understanding are formed by society, and are perverted by society. Thus good or bad society forms or perverts them. It is then of the first importance to know how to choose in order to form and not to pervert them, and we cannot make this choice if they be not already formed and not perverted. Thus a circle is formed, and happy are those who escape it.

Have you never seen persons, who, in order to complain of the little you make of them, bring before you the example of people in high position who esteem them? To such I answer, “Show me the merit by which you have charmed these persons, and I will esteem you too.”

The world is full of good maxims. All that is needed is their right application. For instance, no one doubts that we ought to risk our lives for the common weal, and many do so. But for Religion, none.

Nature diversifies and imitates, art imitates and diversifies.

The more intellect we have ourselves, the more originality do we discover in others. Ordinary people find no difference between men.

Since we cannot be universal, and know all that is to be known of everything, we should know a little of everything. For it is far better to know something of all than to know the whole of one thing, this universality is the best. If we can have both, still better, but if we must choose, let us choose the first. The world feels and acts on this, and the world is often a good judge.

Certain authors speaking of their works, say: “My book, my commentary, my history, etc.” They are like the middle-class people who have a small house of their own, and have “my house” always on the tongue. They would do better to say: “Our book, our commentary, our history, etc.”; because there is in them generally more of other people’s than their own.

A true friend is so great an advantage, even for the greatest lords, in order that he may speak well of them, and uphold them in their absence, that they ought to do all that is possible to have one. But they should choose well, for spite of all they may do for fools, whatever good these say of them would be useless, and

they would not even speak well of them if they found themselves in the minority, for they are without authority. And thus they would abuse them in company.

"You are ungraceful, excuse me, I beg." Without that excuse I had not known there was aught amiss. "With reverence be it spoke...." The only evil is the excuse.

I always dislike such compliments as these: *I have given you a great deal of trouble. I fear I am tiring you. I fear this is too long.* For we either have our audience with us, or we provoke them.

Rivers are roads which move and carry us whither we wish to go.

In every action we must look beyond the action at our past, present and future state, and at others whom it affects, and see the relations of all these things. And then we shall be very careful.

In every dialogue and discourse we ought to be able to say to those who are offended, "Of what do you complain?"

There are many people who listen to the sermon as they listen to vespers.

When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace.

William Finlayson Trotter Translation, 1910

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SECTION I. Thoughts on Mind and on Style

1



THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN the mathematical and the intuitive mind. — In the one the principles are palpable, but removed from ordinary use; so that for want of habit it is difficult to turn one's mind in that direction: but if one turns it thither ever so little, one sees the principles fully, and one must have a quite inaccurate mind who reasons wrongly from principles so plain that it is almost impossible they should escape notice.

But in the intuitive mind the principles are found in common use, and are before the eyes of everybody. One has only to look, and no effort is necessary; it is only a question of good eyesight, but it must be good, for the principles are so subtle and so numerous, that it is almost impossible but that some escape notice. Now the omission of one principle leads to error; thus one must have very clear sight to see all the principles, and in the next place an accurate mind not to draw false deductions from known principles.

All mathematicians would then be intuitive if they had clear sight, for they do not reason incorrectly from principles known to them; and intuitive minds would be mathematical if they could turn their eyes to the principles of mathematics to which they are unused.

The reason, therefore, that some intuitive minds are not mathematical is that they cannot at all turn their attention to the principles of mathematics. But the reason that mathematicians are not intuitive is that they do not see what is before them, and that, accustomed to the exact and plain principles of mathematics, and not reasoning till they have well inspected and arranged their principles, they are lost in matters of intuition where the principles do not allow of such arrangement.

They are scarcely seen; they are felt rather than seen; there is the greatest difficulty in making them felt by those who do not of themselves perceive them. These principles are so fine and so numerous that a very delicate and very clear sense is needed to perceive them, and to judge rightly and justly when they are perceived, without for the most part being able to demonstrate them in order as in mathematics; because the principles are not known to us in the same way, and because it would be an endless matter to undertake it. We must see the matter at once, at one glance, and not by a process of reasoning, at least to a certain degree. And thus it is rare that mathematicians are intuitive, and that men of intuition are mathematicians, because mathematicians wish to treat matters of intuition mathematically, and make themselves ridiculous, wishing to begin with definitions and then with axioms, which is not the way to proceed in this kind of reasoning. Not that the mind does not do so, but it does it tacitly, naturally, and without technical rules; for the expression of it is beyond all men, and only a few can feel it.

Intuitive minds, on the contrary, being thus accustomed to judge at a single glance, are so astonished when they are presented with propositions of which they understand nothing, and the way to which is through definitions and axioms so sterile, and which they are not accustomed to see thus in detail, that they are repelled and disheartened.

But dull minds are never either intuitive or mathematical.

Mathematicians who are only mathematicians have exact minds, provided all things are explained to them by means of definitions and axioms; otherwise they are inaccurate and insufferable, for they are only right when the principles are quite clear.

And men of intuition who are only intuitive cannot have the patience to reach to first principles of things speculative and conceptual, which they have never seen in the world, and which are altogether out of the common.

2

There are different kinds of right understanding; some have right understanding in a certain order of things, and not in others, where they go astray. Some draw conclusions well from a few premises, and this displays an acute judgment.

Others draw conclusions well where there are many premises.

For example, the former easily learn hydrostatics, where the premises are few, but the conclusions are so fine that only the greatest acuteness can reach them.

And in spite of that these persons would perhaps not be great mathematicians, because mathematics contain a great number of premises, and there is perhaps a kind of intellect that can search with ease a few premises to the bottom: and cannot in the least penetrate those matters in which there are many premises.

There are then two kinds of intellect: the one able to penetrate acutely and deeply into the conclusions of given premises, and this is the precise intellect; the other able to comprehend a great number of premises without confusing them, and this is the mathematical intellect. The one has force and exactness, the other comprehension. Now the one quality can exist without the other; the intellect can be strong and narrow, and can also be comprehensive and weak.

3

Those who are accustomed to judge by feeling do not understand the process of reasoning, for they would understand at first sight, and are not used to seek for principles. And others, on the contrary, who are accustomed to reason from principles, do not at all understand matters of feeling, seeking principles, and being unable to see at a glance.

4

Mathematics, intuition. — True eloquence makes light of eloquence, true morality makes light of morality; that is to say, the morality of the judgment, which has no rules, makes light of the morality of the intellect.

For it is to judgment that perception belongs, as science belongs to intellect. Intuition is the part of judgment, mathematics of intellect.

To make light of philosophy is to be a true philosopher.

5

Those who judge of a work by rule are in regard to others as those who have a watch are in regard to others. One says, “It is two hours ago”; the other says, “It is only three-quarters of an hour.” I look at my watch, and say to the one, “You are weary,” and to the other, “Time gallops with you”; for it is only an hour and a half ago, and I laugh at those who tell me that time goes slowly with me, and that I judge by imagination. They do not know that I judge by my watch.

6

Just as we harm the understanding, we harm the feelings also.

The understanding and the feelings are moulded by intercourse; the understanding and feelings are corrupted by intercourse. Thus good or bad society improves or corrupts them. It is, then, all-important to know how to choose in order to improve and not to corrupt them; and we cannot make this choice, if they be not already improved and not corrupted. Thus a circle is formed, and those are fortunate who escape it.

7

The greater intellect one has, the more originality one finds in men. Ordinary persons find no difference between men.

8

There are many people who listen to a sermon in the same way as they listen to vespers.

9

When we wish to correct with advantage, and to show another that he errs, we must notice from what side he views the matter, for on that side it is usually true, and admit that truth to him, but reveal to him the side on which it is false. He is satisfied with that, for he sees that he was not mistaken, and that he only failed to see all sides. Now, no one is offended at not seeing everything; but one does not like to be mistaken, and that perhaps arises from the fact that man naturally cannot see everything, and that naturally he cannot err in the side he looks at, since the perceptions of our senses are always true.

10

People are generally better persuaded by the reasons which they have themselves discovered than by those which have come into the mind of others.

11

All great amusements are dangerous to the Christian life; but among all those which the world has invented there is none more to be feared than the theatre. It is a representation of the passions so natural and so delicate that it excites them and gives birth to them in our hearts, and, above all, to that of love, principally when it is represented as very chaste and virtuous. For the more innocent it appears to innocent souls, the more they are likely to be touched by it. Its violence pleases our self-love, which immediately forms a desire to produce the same effects which are seen so well represented; and, at the same time, we make ourselves a conscience founded on the propriety of the feelings which we see there, by which the fear of pure souls is removed, since they imagine that it cannot hurt their purity to love with a love which seems to them so reasonable.

So we depart from the theatre with our hearts so filled with all the beauty and tenderness of love, the soul and the mind so persuaded of its innocence, that we

are quite ready to receive its first impressions, or rather to seek an opportunity of awakening them in the heart of another, in order that we may receive the same pleasures and the same sacrifices which we have seen so well represented in the theatre.

12

Scaramouch,[1] who only thinks of one thing.

The doctor,[1] who speaks for a quarter of an hour after he has said everything, so full is he of the desire of talking.

13

One likes to see the error, the passion of Cleobuline,[2] because she is unconscious of it. She would be displeasing, if she were not deceived.

14

When a natural discourse paints a passion or an effect, one feels within oneself the truth of what one reads, which was there before, although one did not know it. Hence one is inclined to love him who makes us feel it, for he has not shown us his own riches, but ours. And thus this benefit renders him pleasing to us, besides that such community of intellect as we have with him necessarily inclines the heart to love.

15

Eloquence, which persuades by sweetness, not by authority; as a tyrant, not as a king.

16

Eloquence is an art of saying things in such a way — (1) that those to whom we speak may listen to them without pain and with pleasure; (2) that they feel themselves interested, so that self-love leads them more willingly to reflection upon it.

It consists, then, in a correspondence which we seek to establish between the head and the heart of those to whom we speak on the one hand, and, on the other, between the thoughts and the expressions which we employ. This assumes that we have studied well the heart of man so as to know all its powers, and then to find the just proportions of the discourse which we wish to adapt to them. We must put ourselves in the place of those who are to hear us, and make trial on our own heart of the turn which we give to our discourse in order to see whether one is made for the other, and whether we can assure ourselves that the hearer will be, as it were, forced to surrender. We ought to restrict ourselves, so far as possible, to the simple and natural, and not to magnify that which is little, or belittle that which is great. It is not enough that a thing be beautiful; it must be suitable to the subject, and there must be in it nothing of excess or defect.

17

Rivers are roads which move, and which carry us whither we desire to go.

18

When we do not know the truth of a thing, it is of advantage that there should exist a common error which determines the mind of man, as, for example, the moon, to which is attributed the change of seasons, the progress of disease, &c. For the chief malady of man is restless curiosity about things which he cannot understand; and it is not so bad for him to be in error as to be curious to no purpose.

The manner in which Epictetus, Montaigne, and Salomon de Tultie[3] wrote, is the most usual, the most suggestive, the most remembered, and the oftenest

quoted; because it is entirely composed of thoughts born from the common talk of life. As when we speak of the common error which exists among men that the moon is the cause of everything, we never fail to say that Salomon de Tultie says that when we do not know the truth of a thing, it is of advantage that there should exist a common error, &c.; which is the thought above.

19

The last thing one settles in writing a book is what one should put in first.

20

Order. — Why should I undertake to divide my virtues into four rather than into six? Why should I rather establish virtue in four, in two, in one? Why into *Abstine et sustine*[4] rather than into "Follow Nature," or "Conduct your private affairs without injustice," as Plato, or anything else? But there, you will say, everything is contained in one word. Yes, but it is useless without explanation, and when we come to explain it, as soon as we unfold this maxim which contains all the rest, they emerge in that first confusion which you desired to avoid. So, when they are all included in one, they are hidden and useless, as in a chest, and never appear save in their natural confusion. Nature has established them all without including one in the other.

21

Nature has made all her truths independent of one another. Our art makes one dependent on the other. But this is not natural. Each keeps its own place.

22

Let no one say that I have said nothing new; the arrangement of the subject is new. When we play tennis, we both play with the same ball, but one of us places

it better.

I had as soon it said that I used words employed before. And in the same way if the same thoughts in a different arrangement do not form a different discourse, no more do the same words in their different arrangement form different thoughts!

23

Words differently arranged have a different meaning, and meanings differently arranged have different effects.

24

Language. — We should not turn the mind from one thing to another, except for relaxation, and that when it is necessary and the time suitable, and not otherwise. For he that relaxes out of season wearies, and he who wearies us out of season makes us languid, since we turn quite away. So much does our perverse lust like to do the contrary of what those wish to obtain from us without giving us pleasure, the coin for which we will do whatever is wanted.

25

Eloquence. — It requires the pleasant and the real; but the pleasant must itself be drawn from the true.

26

Eloquence is a painting of thought; and thus those who, after having painted it, add something more, make a picture instead of a portrait.

27

Miscellaneous. Language. — Those who make antitheses by forcing words are like those who make false windows for symmetry. Their rule is not to speak

accurately, but to make apt figures of speech.

28

Symmetry is what we see at a glance; based on the fact that there is no reason for any difference, and based also on the face of man; whence it happens that symmetry is only wanted in breadth, not in height or depth.

29

When we see a natural style, we are astonished and delighted; for we expected to see an author, and we find a man. Whereas those who have good taste, and who seeing a book expect to find a man, are quite surprised to find an author. *Plus poetice quam humane locutus es*.[5] Those honour Nature well, who teach that she can speak on everything, even on theology.

30

We only consult the ear because the heart is wanting. The rule is uprightness.

Beauty of omission, of judgment.

31

All the false beauties which we blame in Cicero have their admirers, and in great number.

32

There is a certain standard of grace and beauty which consists in a certain relation between our nature, such as it is, weak or strong, and the thing which pleases us.

Whatever is formed according to this standard pleases us, be it house, song, discourse, verse, prose, woman, birds, rivers, trees, rooms, dress, &c. Whatever is not made according to this standard displeases those who have good taste.

And as there is a perfect relation between a song and a house which are made after a good model, because they are like this good model, though each after its kind; even so there is a perfect relation between things made after a bad model. Not that the bad model is unique, for there are many; but each bad sonnet, for example, on whatever false model it is formed, is just like a woman dressed after that model.

Nothing makes us understand better the ridiculousness of a false sonnet than to consider nature and the standard, and then to imagine a woman or a house made according to that standard.

33

Poetical beauty. — As we speak of poetical beauty, so ought we to speak of mathematical beauty and medical beauty. But we do not do so; and the reason is that we know well what is the object of mathematics, and that it consists in proofs, and what is the object of medicine, and that it consists in healing. But we do not know in what grace consists, which is the object of poetry. We do not know the natural model which we ought to imitate; and through lack of this knowledge, we have coined fantastic terms, “The golden age,” “The wonder of our times,” “Fatal,” &c., and call this jargon poetical beauty.

But whoever imagines a woman after this model, which consists in saying little things in big words, will see a pretty girl adorned with mirrors and chains, at whom he will smile; because we know better wherein consists the charm of woman than the charm of verse. But those who are ignorant would admire her in this dress, and there are many villages in which she would be taken for the queen; hence we call sonnets made after this model “Village Queens.”

34

No one passes in the world as skilled in verse unless he has put up the sign of a poet, a mathematician, etc. But educated people do not want a sign, and draw

little distinction between the trade of a poet and that of an embroiderer.

People of education are not called poets or mathematicians, &c.; but they are all these, and judges of all these. No one guesses what they are. When they come into society, they talk on matters about which the rest are talking. We do not observe in them one quality rather than another, save when they have to make use of it. But then we remember it, for it is characteristic of such persons that we do not say of them that they are fine speakers, when it is not a question of oratory, and that we say of them that they are fine speakers, when it is such a question.

It is therefore false praise to give a man when we say of him, on his entry, that he is a very clever poet; and it is a bad sign when a man is not asked to give his judgment on some verses.

35

We should not be able to say of a man, "He is a mathematician," or "a preacher," or "eloquent"; but that he is "a gentleman." That universal quality alone pleases me. It is a bad sign when, on seeing a person, you remember his book. I would prefer you to see no quality till you meet it and have occasion to use it (*Ne quid nimis*,[6]) for fear some one quality prevail and designate the man. Let none think him a fine speaker, unless oratory be in question, and then let them think it.

36

Man is full of wants: he loves only those who can satisfy them all. "This one is a good mathematician," one will say. But I have nothing to do with mathematics; he would take me for a proposition. "That one is a good soldier." He would take me for a besieged town. I need, then, an upright man who can accommodate himself generally to all my wants.

37

Since we cannot be universal and know all that is to be known of everything, we ought to know a little about everything. For it is far better to know something about everything than to know all about one thing. This universality is the best. If we can have both, still better; but if we must choose, we ought to choose the former. And the world feels this and does so; for the world is often a good judge.

38

A poet and not an honest man.

39

If lightning fell on low places, &c., poets, and those who can only reason about things of that kind, would lack proofs.

40

If we wished to prove the examples which we take to prove other things, we should have to take those other things to be examples; for, as we always believe the difficulty is in what we wish to prove, we find the examples clearer and a help to demonstration.

Thus when we wish to demonstrate a general theorem, we must give the rule as applied to a particular case; but if we wish to demonstrate a particular case, we must begin with the general rule. For we always find the thing obscure which we wish to prove, and that clear which we use for the proof; for, when a thing is put forward to be proved, we first fill ourselves with the imagination that it is therefore obscure, and on the contrary that what is to prove it is clear, and so we understand it easily.

41

Epigrams of Martial. — Man loves malice, but not against one-eyed men nor the unfortunate, but against the fortunate and proud. People are mistaken in thinking otherwise.

For lust is the source of all our actions, and humanity, &c. We must please those who have humane and tender feelings. That epigram about two one-eyed people is worthless, for it does not console them, and only gives a point to the author's glory. All that is only for the sake of the author is worthless. *Ambitiosa recident ornamenta*.[7]

42

To call a king "Prince" is pleasing, because it diminishes his rank.

43

Certain authors, speaking of their works, say, "My book," "My commentary," "My history," &c. They resemble middle-class people who have a house of their own, and always have "My house" on their tongue. They would do better to say, "Our book," "Our commentary," "Our history," &c., because there is in them usually more of other people's than their own.

44

Do you wish people to believe good of you? Don't speak.

45

Languages are ciphers, wherein letters are not changed into letters, but words into words, so that an unknown language is decipherable.

46

A maker of witticisms, a bad character.

47

There are some who speak well and write badly. For the place and the audience warm them, and draw from their minds more than they think of without that warmth.

48

When we find words repeated in a discourse, and, in trying to correct them, discover that they are so appropriate that we would spoil the discourse, we must leave them alone. This is the test; and our attempt is the work of envy, which is blind, and does not see that repetition is not in this place a fault; for there is no general rule.

49

To mask nature and disguise her. No more king, pope, bishop — but *august monarch*, &c.; not Paris — *the capital of the kingdom*. There are places in which we ought to call Paris, Paris, and others in which we ought to call it the capital of the kingdom.

50

The same meaning changes with the words which express it. Meanings receive their dignity from words instead of giving it to them. Examples should be sought.

51

Sceptic, for obstinate.

52

No one calls another a Cartesian but he who is not one himself, a pedant but a pedant, a provincial but a provincial; and I would wager it was the printer who put it on the title of *Letters to a Provincial*.

53

A carriage *upset* or *overturned*, according to the meaning *To spread abroad* or *upset*, according to the meaning. (The argument by force of M. le Maître over the friar.)

54

Miscellaneous. — A form of speech, "I should have liked to apply myself to that."

55

The *aperitive* virtue of a key, the *attractive* virtue of a hook.

56

To guess: "The part that I take in your trouble." The Cardinal[8] did not want to be guessed.

"My mind is disquieted." *I am disquieted* is better.

57

I always feel uncomfortable under such compliments as these: "I have given you a great deal of trouble," "I am afraid I am boring you," "I fear this is too long." We either carry our audience with us, or irritate them.

58

You are ungraceful: "Excuse me, pray." Without that excuse I would not have known there was anything amiss. "With reverence be it spoken . . ." The only

thing bad is their excuse.

59

“To extinguish the torch of sedition;” too luxuriant. “The restlessness of his genius;” two superfluous grand words.

ENDNOTES.

[1] Stock characters in Italian comedy.

[2] Princess of Corinth, in Mlle. de Scudéry’s romance of “Artamène ou le grand Cyrus.”

[3] The name assumed by Pascal in his “Provincial Letters.”

[4] “Abstain and endure” — a Stoic maxim.

[5] “You have spoken more poetically than humanly.”

[6] “Nothing in excess.”

[7] “They cut off superfluous ornament” — Horace.

[8] Cardinal Mazarin.

SECTION II. The Misery of Man without God

60



FIRST PART: MISERY of man without God.

Second part: Happiness of man with God.

Or, *First part:* That nature is corrupt. Proved by nature itself.

Second part: That there is a Redeemer. Proved by Scripture.

61

Order. — I might well have taken this discourse in an order like this; to show the vanity of all conditions of men, to show the vanity of ordinary lives, and then the vanity of philosophic lives, sceptics, stoics; but the order would not have been kept. I know a little what it is, and how few people understand it. No human science can keep it. Saint Thomas did not keep it. Mathematics keep it, but they are useless on account of their depth.

62

Preface to the first part. — To speak of those who have treated of the knowledge of self; of the divisions of Charron, which sadden and weary us; of the confusion of Montaigne; that he was quite aware of his want of method, and shunned it by jumping from subject to subject; that he sought to be fashionable.

His foolish project of describing himself! And this not casually and against his maxims, since every one makes mistakes, but by his maxims themselves, and by first and chief design. For to say silly things by chance and weakness is a common misfortune; but to say them intentionally is intolerable, and to say such as that . . .

63

Montaigne. — Montaigne's faults are great. Lewd words; this is bad, notwithstanding Mademoiselle de Gournay.[1] Credulous; *people without eyes*. Ignorant; *squaring the circle, a greater world*. His opinions on suicide, on death. He suggests an indifference about salvation, *without fear and without repentance*. As his book was not written with a religious purpose, he was not bound to mention religion; but it is always our duty not to turn men from it. One can excuse his rather free and licentious opinions on some relations of life (730, 231); but one cannot excuse his thoroughly pagan views on death, for a man must renounce piety altogether, if he does not at least wish to die like a Christian. Now, through the whole of his book his only conception of death is a cowardly and effeminate one.

64

It is not in Montaigne, but in myself, that I find all that I see in him.

65

What good there is in Montaigne can only have been acquired with difficulty. The evil that is in him, I mean apart from his morality, could have been corrected in a moment, if he had been informed that he made too much of trifles and spoke too much of himself.

66

One must know oneself. If this does not serve to discover truth, it at least serves as a rule of life, and there is nothing better.

67

The vanity of the sciences. — Physical science will not console me for the ignorance of morality in the time of affliction. But the science of ethics will always console me for the ignorance of the physical sciences.

68

Men are never taught to be gentlemen, and are taught everything else; and they never plume themselves so much on the rest of their knowledge as on knowing how to be gentlemen. They only plume themselves on knowing the one thing they do not know.

69

The infinites, the mean. — When we read too fast or too slowly, we understand nothing.

70

Nature . . . — Nature has set us so well in the centre, that if we change one side of the balance, we change the other also. *I act. Τὰ ζῶα τρέχει.*[2] This makes me believe that the springs in our brain are so adjusted that he who touches one touches also its contrary.

71

Too much and too little wine. Give him none, he cannot find truth; give him too much, the same.

72

Man's disproportion. — [This is where our innate knowledge leads us. If it be not true, there is no truth in man; and if it be true, he finds therein great cause for humiliation, being compelled to abase himself in one way or another. And since he cannot exist without this knowledge, I wish that, before entering on deeper researches into nature, he would consider her both seriously and at leisure, that he would reflect upon himself also, and knowing what proportion there is. . . .] Let man then contemplate the whole of nature in her full and grand majesty, and turn his vision from the low objects which surround him. Let him gaze on that brilliant light, set like an eternal lamp to illumine the universe; let the earth appear to him a point in comparison with the vast circle described by the sun; and let him wonder at the fact that this vast circle is itself but a very fine point in comparison with that described by the stars in their revolution round the firmament. But if our view be arrested there, let our imagination pass beyond; it will sooner exhaust the power of conception than nature that of supplying material for conception. The whole visible world is only an imperceptible atom in the ample bosom of nature. No idea approaches it. We may enlarge our conceptions beyond all imaginable space; we

only produce atoms in comparison with the reality of things. It is an infinite sphere, the centre of which is everywhere, the circumference nowhere. In short it is the greatest sensible mark of the almighty power of God, that imagination loses itself in that thought.

Returning to himself, let man consider what he is in comparison with all existence; let him regard himself as lost in this remote corner of nature; and from the little cell in which he finds himself lodged, I mean the universe, let him estimate at their true value the earth, kingdoms, cities, and himself. What is a man in the Infinite?

But to show him another prodigy equally astonishing, let him examine the most delicate things he knows. Let a mite be given him, with its minute body and parts incomparably more minute, limbs with their joints, veins in the limbs, blood in the veins, humours in the blood, drops in the humours, vapours in the drops. Dividing these last things again, let him exhaust his powers of conception, and let the last object at which he can arrive be now that of our discourse. Perhaps he will think that here is the smallest point in nature. I will let him see therein a new abyss. I will paint for him not only the visible universe, but all that he can conceive of nature's immensity in the womb of this abridged atom. Let him see therein an infinity of universes, each of which has its firmament, its planets, its earth, in the same proportion as in the visible world; in each earth animals, and in the last mites, in which he will find again all that the first had, finding still in these others the same thing without end and without cessation. Let him lose himself in wonders as amazing in their littleness as the others in their vastness. For who will not be astounded at the fact that our body, which a little while ago was imperceptible in the universe, itself imperceptible in the bosom of the whole, is now a colossus, a world, or rather a whole, in respect of the nothingness which we cannot reach? He who regards himself in this light will be afraid of himself, and observing himself sustained in the body given him by nature between those two abysses of the Infinite and Nothing, will tremble at the sight of these marvels; and I think that, as his curiosity changes into admiration, he will be more disposed to contemplate them in silence than to examine them with presumption.

For in fact what is man in nature? A Nothing in comparison with the Infinite, an All in comparison with the Nothing, a mean between nothing and everything. Since he is infinitely removed from comprehending the extremes, the end of things and their beginning are hopelessly hidden from him in an impenetrable secret, he

is equally incapable of seeing the Nothing from which he was made, and the Infinite in which he is swallowed up.

What will he do then, but perceive the appearance of the middle of things, in an eternal despair of knowing either their beginning or their end. All things proceed from the Nothing, and are borne towards the Infinite. Who will follow these marvellous processes? The Author of these wonders understands them. None other can do so.

Through failure to contemplate these Infinites, men have rashly rushed into the examination of nature, as though they bore some proportion to her. It is strange that they have wished to understand the beginnings of things, and thence to arrive at the knowledge of the whole, with a presumption as infinite as their object. For surely this design cannot be formed without presumption or without a capacity infinite like nature.

If we are well informed, we understand that, as nature has graven her image and that of her Author on all things, they almost all partake of her double infinity. Thus we see that all the sciences are infinite in the extent of their researches. For who doubts that geometry, for instance, has an infinite infinity of problems to solve? They are also infinite in the multitude and fineness of their premises; for it is clear that those which are put forward as ultimate are not self-supporting, but are based on others which, again having others for their support, do not permit of finality. But we represent some as ultimate for reason, in the same way as in regard to material objects we call that an indivisible point beyond which our senses can no longer perceive anything, although by its nature it is infinitely divisible.

Of these two Infinites of science, that of greatness is the most palpable, and hence a few persons have pretended to know all things. “I will speak of the whole,” said Democritus.

But the infinitely little is the least obvious. Philosophers have much oftener claimed to have reached it, and it is here they have all stumbled. This has given rise to such common titles as *First Principles*, *Principles of Philosophy*, and the like, as ostentatious in fact, though not in appearance, as that one which blinds us, *De omni scibili*.[3]

We naturally believe ourselves far more capable of reaching the centre of things than of embracing their circumference. The visible extent of the world visibly exceeds us; but as we exceed little things, we think

ourselves more capable of knowing them. And yet we need no less capacity for attaining the Nothing than the All. Infinite capacity is required for both, and it seems to me that whoever shall have understood the ultimate principles of being might also attain to the knowledge of the Infinite. The one depends on the other, and one leads to the other. These extremes meet and reunite by force of distance, and find each other in God, and in God alone.

Let us then take our compass; we are something, and we are not everything. The nature of our existence hides from us the knowledge of first beginnings which are born of the Nothing; and the littleness of our being conceals from us the sight of the Infinite.

Our intellect holds the same position in the world of thought as our body occupies in the expanse of nature.

Limited as we are in every way, this state which holds the mean between two extremes is present in all our impotence. Our senses perceive no extreme. Too much sound deafens us; too much light dazzles us; too great distance or proximity hinders our view. Too great length and too great brevity of discourse tend to obscurity; too much truth is paralysing (I know some who cannot understand that to take four from nothing leaves nothing). First principles are too self-evident for us; too much pleasure disagrees with us. Too many concords are annoying in music; too many benefits irritate us; we wish to have the wherewithal to over-pay our debts. *Beneficia eo usque læta sunt dum videntur exsolvi posse; ubi multum antevenere, pro gratia odium redditur.*[4] We feel neither extreme heat nor extreme cold. Excessive qualities are prejudicial to us and not perceptible by the senses; we do not feel but suffer them. Extreme youth and extreme age hinder the mind, as also too much and too little education. In short, extremes are for us as though they were not, and we are not within their notice. They escape us, or we them.

This is our true state; this is what makes us incapable of certain knowledge and of absolute ignorance. We sail within a vast sphere, ever drifting in uncertainty, driven from end to end. When we think to attach ourselves to any point and to fasten to it, it wavers and leaves us; and if we follow it, it eludes our grasp, slips past us, and vanishes for ever. Nothing stays for us. This is our natural condition, and yet most contrary to our inclination; we burn with desire to find solid ground and an ultimate sure foundation whereon to build a tower reaching to the Infinite. But our whole groundwork cracks, and the earth opens to abysses.

Let us therefore not look for certainty and stability. Our reason is always deceived by fickle shadows; nothing can fix the finite between the two Infinites, which both enclose and fly from it.

If this be well understood, I think that we shall remain at rest, each in the state wherein nature has placed him. As this sphere which has fallen to us as our lot is always distant from either extreme, what matters it that man should have a little more knowledge of the universe? If he has it, he but gets a little higher. Is he not always infinitely removed from the end, and is not the duration of our life equally removed from eternity, even if it lasts ten years longer?

In comparison with these Infinites all finites are equal, and I see no reason for fixing our imagination on one more than on another. The only comparison which we make of ourselves to the finite is painful to us.

If man made himself the first object of study, he would see how incapable he is of going further. How can a part know the whole? But he may perhaps aspire to know at least the parts to which he bears some proportion. But the parts of the world are all so related and linked to one another, that I believe it impossible to know one without the other and without the whole.

Man, for instance, is related to all he knows. He needs a place wherein to abide, time through which to live, motion in order to live, elements to compose him, warmth and food to nourish him, air to breathe. He sees light; he feels bodies; in short, he is in a dependent alliance with everything. To know man, then, it is necessary to know how it happens that he needs air to live, and, to know the air, we must know how it is thus related to the life of man, etc. Flame cannot exist without air; therefore to understand the one, we must understand the other.

Since everything then is cause and effect, dependent and supporting, mediate and immediate, and all is held together by a natural though imperceptible chain, which binds together things most distant and most different, I hold it equally impossible to know the parts without knowing the whole, and to know the whole without knowing the parts in detail.

[The eternity of things in itself or in God must also astonish our brief duration. The fixed and constant immobility of nature, in comparison with the continual change which goes on within us, must have the same effect.]

And what completes our incapability of knowing things, is the fact that they are simple, and that we are composed of two opposite natures, different in kind, soul and body. For it is impossible that our rational part should be other than spiritual; and if any one maintain that we are simply corporeal, this would far more exclude us from the knowledge of things, there being nothing so inconceivable as to say that matter knows itself. It is impossible to imagine how it should know itself.

So if we are simply material, we can know nothing at all; and if we are composed of mind and matter, we cannot know perfectly things which are simple, whether spiritual or corporeal. Hence it comes that almost all philosophers have confused ideas of things, and speak of material things in spiritual terms, and of spiritual things in material terms. For they say boldly that bodies have a tendency to fall, that they seek after their centre, that they fly from destruction, that they fear the void, that they have inclinations, sympathies, antipathies, all of which attributes pertain only to mind. And in speaking of minds, they consider them as in a place, and attribute to them movement from one place to another; and these are qualities which belong only to bodies.

Instead of receiving the ideas of these things in their purity, we colour them with our own qualities, and stamp with our composite being all the simple things which we contemplate.

Who would not think, seeing us compose all things of mind and body, but that this mixture would be quite intelligible to us? Yet it is the very thing we least understand. Man is to himself the most wonderful object in nature; for he cannot conceive what the body is, still less what the mind is, and least of all how a body should be united to a mind. This is the consummation of his difficulties, and yet it is his very being. *Modus quo corporibus adhærent spiritus comprehendi ab hominibus non potest, et hoc tamen homo est*.[5] Finally, to complete the proof of our weakness, I shall conclude with these two considerations…

73

[But perhaps this subject goes beyond the capacity of reason. Let us therefore examine her solutions to problems within her powers. If there be anything to which her own interest must have made her apply herself most seriously, it is the inquiry into her own sovereign good. Let us see, then, wherein these strong and clear-sighted souls have placed it, and whether they agree.

One says that the sovereign good consists in virtue, another in pleasure, another in the knowledge of nature, another in truth, *Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas*,[6] another in total ignorance, another in indolence, others in disregarding appearances, another in wondering at nothing, *nihil admirari prope res una quæ possit facere et servare beatum*,[7] and the true sceptics in their indifference, doubt, and perpetual suspense, and others, wiser, think to find a better definition. We are well satisfied.

To transpose after the laws to the following title.

We must see if this fine philosophy have gained nothing certain from so long and so intent study; perhaps at least the soul will know itself. Let us hear the rulers of the world on this subject. What have they thought of her substance? 394.[8] Have they been more fortunate in locating her? 395. What have they found out about her origin, duration, and departure? 399.

Is then the soul too noble a subject for their feeble lights? Let us then abase her to matter and see if she knows whereof is made the very body which she animates, and those others which she contemplates and moves at her will. What have those great dogmatists, who are ignorant of nothing, known of this matter? *Harum sententiarum*, 393.

This would doubtless suffice, if reason were reasonable. She is reasonable enough to admit that she has been unable to find anything durable, but she does not yet despair of reaching it; she is as ardent as ever in this search, and is confident she has within her the necessary powers for this conquest. We must therefore conclude, and, after having examined her powers in their effects, observe them in themselves, and see if she has a nature and a grasp capable of laying hold of the truth.]

74

A letter *on the foolishness of human knowledge and philosophy*.

This letter before *Diversion*.

Felix qui potuit … Nihil admirari.

280 kinds of sovereign good in Montaigne.

75

Part I, 1, 2, c. 1, section 4. [*Probability.* — It will not be difficult to put the case a stage lower, and make it appear ridiculous. To begin at the very beginning.] What is more absurd than to say that lifeless bodies have passions, fears, hatreds — that insensible bodies, lifeless and incapable of life, have passions which presuppose at least a sensitive soul to feel them, nay more, that the object of their dread is the void? What is there in the void that could make them afraid? Nothing is more shallow and ridiculous. This is not all; it is said that they have in themselves a source of movement to shun the void. Have they arms, legs, muscles, nerves?

76

To write against those who made too profound a study of science: Descartes.

77

I cannot forgive Descartes. In all his philosophy he would have been quite willing to dispense with God. But he had to make Him give a fillip to set the world in motion; beyond this, he has no further need of God.

78

Descartes useless and uncertain.

79

[*Descartes.* — We must say summarily: "This is made by figure and motion," for it is true. But to say what these are, and to compose the machine, is ridiculous. For it is useless, uncertain, and painful. And were it true, we do not think all philosophy is worth one hour of pain.]

80

How comes it that a cripple does not offend us, but that a fool does? Because a cripple recognises that we walk straight, whereas a fool declares that it is we who are silly; if it were not so, we should feel pity and not

anger.

Epictetus asks still more strongly: “Why are we not angry if we are told that we have a headache, and why are we angry if we are told that we reason badly, or choose wrongly?” The reason is that we are quite certain that we have not a headache, or are not lame, but we are not so sure that we make a true choice. So having assurance only because we see with our whole sight, it puts us into suspense and surprise when another with his whole sight sees the opposite, and still more so when a thousand others deride our choice. For we must prefer our own lights to those of so many others, and that is bold and difficult. There is never this contradiction in the feelings towards a cripple.

81

It is natural for the mind to believe, and for the will to love; so that, for want of true objects, they must attach themselves to false.

82

Imagination. — It is that deceitful part in man, that mistress of error and falsity, the more deceptive that she is not always so; for she would be an infallible rule of truth, if she were an infallible rule of falsehood. But being most generally false, she gives no sign of her nature, impressing the same character on the true and the false.

I do not speak of fools, I speak of the wisest men; and it is among them that the imagination has the great gift of persuasion. Reason protests in vain; it cannot set a true value on things.

This arrogant power, the enemy of reason, who likes to rule and dominate it, has established in man a second nature to show how all-powerful she is. She makes men happy and sad, healthy and sick, rich and poor; she compels reason to believe, doubt, and deny; she blunts the senses, or quickens them; she has her fools and sages; and nothing vexes us more than to see that she fills her devotees with a satisfaction far more full and entire than does reason. Those who have a lively imagination are a great deal more pleased with themselves than the wise can reasonably be. They look down upon men with haughtiness; they argue with boldness and confidence, others with fear and diffidence; and this gaiety of countenance often gives them the advantage in

the opinion of the hearers, such favour have the imaginary wise in the eyes of judges of like nature. Imagination cannot make fools wise; but she can make them happy, to the envy of reason which can only make its friends miserable; the one covers them with glory, the other with shame.

What but this faculty of imagination dispenses reputation, awards respect and veneration to persons, works, laws, and the great? How insufficient are all the riches of the earth without her consent!

Would you not say that this magistrate, whose venerable age commands the respect of a whole people, is governed by pure and lofty reason, and that he judges causes according to their true nature without considering those mere trifles which only affect the imagination of the weak? See him go to sermon, full of devout zeal, strengthening his reason with the ardour of his love. He is ready to listen with exemplary respect. Let the preacher appear, and let nature have given him a hoarse voice or a comical cast of countenance, or let his barber have given him a bad shave, or let by chance his dress be more dirtied than usual, then however great the truths he announces, I wager our senator loses his gravity.

If the greatest philosopher in the world find himself upon a plank wider than actually necessary, but hanging over a precipice, his imagination will prevail, though his reason convince him of his safety. Many cannot bear the thought without a cold sweat. I will not state all its effects.

Every one knows that the sight of cats or rats, the crushing of a coal, etc. may unhinge the reason. The tone of voice affects the wisest, and changes the force of a discourse or a poem.

Love or hate alters the aspect of justice. How much greater confidence has an advocate, retained with a large fee, in the justice of his cause! How much better does his bold manner make his case appear to the judges, deceived as they are by appearances! How ludicrous is reason, blown with a breath in every direction!

I should have to enumerate almost every action of men who scarce waver save under her assaults. For reason has been obliged to yield, and the wisest reason takes as her own principles those which the imagination of man has everywhere rashly introduced. [He who would follow reason only would be deemed foolish by the generality of men. We must judge by the opinion of the majority of mankind. Because it has pleased them, we must work all day for pleasures seen to be imaginary; and after sleep has refreshed our tired reason, we must

forthwith start up and rush after phantoms, and suffer the impressions of this mistress of the world. This is one of the sources of error, but it is not the only one.]

Our magistrates have known well this mystery. Their red robes, the ermine in which they wrap themselves like furry cats, the courts in which they administer justice, the *fleurs-de-lis*, and all such august apparel were necessary; if the physicians had not their cassocks and their mules, if the doctors had not their square caps and their robes four times too wide, they would never have duped the world, which cannot resist so original an appearance. If magistrates had true justice, and if physicians had the true art of healing, they would have no occasion for square caps; the majesty of these sciences would of itself be venerable enough. But having only imaginary knowledge, they must employ those silly tools that strike the imagination with which they have to deal; and thereby in fact they inspire respect. Soldiers alone are not disguised in this manner, because indeed their part is the most essential; they establish themselves by force, the others by show.

Therefore our kings seek out no disguises. They do not mask themselves in extraordinary costumes to appear such; but they are accompanied by guards and halberdiers. Those armed and red-faced puppets who have hands and power for them alone, those trumpets and drums which go before them, and those legions round about them, make the stoutest tremble. They have not dress only, they have might. A very refined reason is required to regard as an ordinary man the Grand Turk, in his superb seraglio, surrounded by forty thousand janissaries.

We cannot even see an advocate in his robe and with his cap on his head, without a favourable opinion of his ability. The imagination disposes of everything; it makes beauty, justice, and happiness, which is everything in the world. I should much like to see an Italian work, of which I only know the title, which alone is worth many books, *Della opinione regina del mondo*.[9] I approve of the book without knowing it, save the evil in it, if any. These are pretty much the effects of that deceptive faculty, which seems to have been expressly given us to lead us into necessary error. We have, however, many other sources of error.

Not only are old impressions capable of misleading us; the charms of novelty have the same power. Hence arise all the disputes of men, who taunt each other either with following the false impressions of childhood or with running rashly after the new. Who keeps the due mean? Let him appear and prove it. There is no

principle, however natural to us from infancy, which may not be made to pass for a false impression either of education or of sense.

“Because,” say some, “you have believed from childhood that a box was empty when you saw nothing in it, you have believed in the possibility of a vacuum. This is an illusion of your senses, strengthened by custom, which science must correct.” “Because,” say others, “you have been taught at school that there is no vacuum, you have perverted your common sense which clearly comprehended it, and you must correct this by returning to your first state.” Which has deceived you, your senses or your education?

We have another source of error in diseases. They spoil the judgment and the senses; and if the more serious produce a sensible change, I do not doubt that slighter ills produce a proportionate impression.

Our own interest is again a marvellous instrument for nicely putting out our eyes. The justest man in the world is not allowed to be judge in his own cause; I know some who, in order not to fall into this self-love, have been perfectly unjust out of opposition. The sure way of losing a just cause has been to get it recommended to these men by their near relatives.

Justice and truth are two such subtle points, that our tools are too blunt to touch them accurately. If they reach the point, they either crush it, or lean all round, more on the false than on the true.

[Man is so happily formed that he has no…good of the true, and several excellent of the false. Let us now see how much… But the most powerful cause of error is the war existing between the senses and reason.]

83

We must thus begin the chapter on the deceptive powers. Man is only a subject full of error, natural and ineffaceable, without grace. Nothing shows him the truth. Everything deceives him. These two sources of truth, reason and the senses, besides being both wanting in sincerity, deceive each other in turn. The senses mislead the reason with false appearances, and receive from reason in their turn the same trickery which they apply to her; reason has her revenge. The passions of the soul trouble the senses, and make false impressions upon them. They rival each other in falsehood and deception.

But besides those errors which arise accidentally and through lack of intelligence, with these heterogeneous faculties…

84

The imagination enlarges little objects so as to fill our souls with a fantastic estimate; and, with rash insolence, it belittles the great to its own measure, as when talking of God.

85

Things which have most hold on us, as the concealment of our few possessions, are often a mere nothing. It is a nothing which our imagination magnifies into a mountain. Another turn of the imagination would make us discover this without difficulty.

86

[My fancy makes me hate a croaker, and one who pants when eating. Fancy has great weight. Shall we profit by it? Shall we yield to this weight because it is natural? No, but by resisting it.…]

87

Quasi quidquam infelicius sit homini cui sua figmenta dominantur[10] (Plin.)

88

Children who are frightened at the face they have blackened are but children. But how shall one who is so weak in his childhood become really strong when he grows older? We only change our fancies. All that is made perfect by progress perishes also by progress. All that has been weak can never become absolutely strong. We say in vain, "He has grown, he has changed"; he is also the same.

89

Custom is our nature. He who is accustomed to the faith believes in it, can no longer fear hell, and believes in nothing else. He who is accustomed to believe that the king is terrible…&c. Who doubts then that our soul,

being accustomed to see number, space, motion, believes that and nothing else?

90

Quod crebro videt non miratur, etiamsi cur fiat nescit; quod ante non viderit, id si evenerit, ostentum esse censet.[11] (Cic. 583.)

Næ iste magno conatu magnas nugas dixerit.[12]

91

Spongia solis.[13] — When we see the same effect always recur, we infer a natural necessity in it, as that there will be a to-morrow, &c. But nature often deceives us, and does not subject herself to her own rules.

92

What are our natural principles but principles of custom? In children they are those which they have received from the habits of their fathers, as hunting in animals. A different custom will cause different natural principles. This is seen in experience; and if there are some natural principles ineradicable by custom, there are also some customs opposed to nature, ineradicable by nature, or by a second custom. This depends on disposition.

93

Parents fear lest the natural love of their children may fade away. What kind of nature is that which is subject to decay? Custom is a second nature which destroys the former. But what is nature? For is custom not natural? I am much afraid that nature is itself only a first custom, as custom is a second nature.

94

The nature of man is wholly natural, *omne animal*.[14]

There is nothing he may not make natural; there is nothing natural he may not lose.

95

Memory, joy, are intuitions; and even mathematical propositions become intuitions, for education produces natural intuitions, and natural intuitions are erased by education.

96

When we are accustomed to use bad reasons for proving natural effects, we are not willing to receive good reasons when they are discovered. An example may be given from the circulation of the blood as a reason why the vein swells below the ligature.

97

The most important affair in life is the choice of a calling; chance decides it. Custom makes men masons, soldiers, slaters. “He is a good slater,” says one, and, speaking of soldiers, remarks, “They are perfect fools.” But others affirm, “There is nothing great but war, the rest of men are good for nothing.” We choose our callings according as we hear this or that praised or despised in our childhood, for we naturally love truth and hate folly. These words move us; the only error is in their application. So great is the force of custom that out of those whom nature has only made men, are created all conditions of men. For some districts are full of masons, others of soldiers, etc. Certainly nature is not so uniform. It is custom then which does this, for it constrains nature. But sometimes nature gains the ascendancy, and preserves man’s instinct, in spite of all custom, good or bad.

98

Bias leading to error. It is a deplorable thing to see all men deliberating on means alone, and not on the end. Each thinks how he will acquit himself in his condition; but as for the choice of condition, or of country, chance gives them to us.

It is a pitiable thing to see so many Turks, heretics, and infidels follow the way of their fathers for the sole reason that each has been imbued with the prejudice that it is the best. And that fixes for each man his conditions of locksmith, soldier, &c.

Hence savages care nothing for Providence.

99

There is an universal and essential difference between the actions of the will and all other actions.

The will is one of the chief factors in belief, not that it creates belief, but because things are true or false according to the aspect in which we look at them. The will, which prefers one aspect to another, turns away the mind from considering the qualities of all that it does not like to see; and thus the mind, moving in accord with the will, stops to consider the aspect which it likes, and so judges by what it sees.

100

Self-love. — The nature of self-love and of this human Ego is to love self only and consider self only. But what will man do? He cannot prevent this object that he loves from being full of faults and wants. He wants to be great, and he sees himself small. He wants to be happy, and he sees himself miserable. He wants to be perfect, and he sees himself full of imperfections. He wants to be the object of love and esteem among men, and he sees that his faults merit only their hatred and contempt. This embarrassment in which he finds himself produces in him the most unrighteous and criminal passion that can be imagined; for he conceives a mortal enmity against that truth which reproves him, and which convinces him of his faults. He would annihilate it, but, unable to destroy it in its essence, he destroys it as far as possible in his own knowledge and in that of others; that is to say, he devotes all his attention to hiding his faults both from others and from himself, and he cannot endure either that others should point them out to him, or that they should see them.

Truly it is an evil to be full of faults; but it is a still greater evil to be full of them, and to be unwilling to recognise them, since that is to add the further fault of a voluntary illusion. We do not like others to deceive us; we do not think it fair that they should be held in higher esteem by us than they deserve; it is not then fair that we should deceive them, and should wish them to esteem us more highly than we deserve.

Thus, when they discover only the imperfections and vices which we really have, it is plain they do us no wrong, since it is not they who cause them; they rather do us good, since they help us to free ourselves from an evil, namely, the ignorance of these imperfections. We ought not to be angry at their knowing our faults

and despising us; it is but right that they should know us for what we are, and should despise us, if we are contemptible.

Such are the feelings that would arise in a heart full of equity and justice. What must we say then of our own heart, when we see in it a wholly different disposition? For is it not true that we hate truth and those who tell it us, and that we like them to be deceived in our favour, and prefer to be esteemed by them as being other than what we are in fact? One proof of this makes me shudder. The Catholic religion does not bind us to confess our sins indiscriminately to everybody; it allows them to remain hidden from all other men save one, to whom she bids us reveal the innermost recesses of our heart, and show ourselves as we are. There is only this one man in the world whom she orders us to undeceive, and she binds him to an inviolable secrecy, which makes this knowledge to him as if it were not. Can we imagine anything more charitable and pleasant? And yet the corruption of man is such that he finds even this law harsh; and it is one of the main reasons which have caused a great part of Europe to rebel against the Church.

How unjust and unreasonable is the heart of man, which feels it disagreeable to be obliged to do in regard to one man what in some measure it were right to do to all men! For is it right that we should deceive men?

There are different degrees in this aversion to truth; but all may perhaps be said to have it in some degree, because it is inseparable from self-love. It is this false delicacy which makes those who are under the necessity of reproving others choose so many windings and middle courses to avoid offence. They must lessen our faults, appear to excuse them, intersperse praises and evidence of love and esteem. Despite all this, the medicine does not cease to be bitter to self-love. It takes as little as it can, always with disgust, and often with a secret spite against those who administer it.

Hence it happens that if any have some interest in being loved by us, they are averse to render us a service which they know to be disagreeable. They treat us as we wish to be treated. We hate the truth, and they hide it from us. We desire flattery, and they flatter us. We like to be deceived, and they deceive us.

So each degree of good fortune which raises us in the world removes us farther from truth, because we are most afraid of wounding those whose affection is most useful and whose dislike is most dangerous. A prince may be the byword of all Europe, and he alone will know nothing of it. I am not astonished. To tell the truth

is useful to those to whom it is spoken, but disadvantageous to those who tell it, because it makes them disliked. Now those who live with princes love their own interests more than that of the prince whom they serve; and so they take care not to confer on him a benefit so as to injure themselves.

This evil is no doubt greater and more common among the higher classes; but the lower are not exempt from it, since there is always some advantage in making men love us. Human life is thus only a perpetual illusion; men deceive and flatter each other. No one speaks of us in our presence as he does of us in our absence. Human society is founded on mutual deceit; few friendships would endure if each knew what his friend said of him in his absence, although he then spoke in sincerity and without passion.

Man is then only disguise, falsehood, and hypocrisy, both in himself and in regard to others. He does not wish any one to tell him the truth; he avoids telling it to others, and all these dispositions, so removed from justice and reason, have a natural root in his heart.

101

I set it down as a fact that if all men knew what each said of the other, there would not be four friends in the world. This is apparent from the quarrels which arise from the indiscreet tales told from time to time. I say, further, all men would be…

102

Some vices only lay hold of us by means of others, and these, like branches, fall on removal of the trunk.

103

The example of Alexander's chastity has not made so many continent as that of his drunkenness has made intemperate. It is not shameful not to be as virtuous as he, and it seems excusable to be no more vicious. We do not believe ourselves to be exactly sharing in the vices of the vulgar, when we see that we are sharing in those of great men; and yet we do not observe that in these matters they are ordinary men. We hold on to them by the same end by which they hold on to the rabble; for, however exalted they are, they are still united at some point to the lowest of men. They are not suspended in the air, quite removed from our society. No,

no; if they are greater than we, it is because their heads are higher; but their feet are as low as ours. They are all on the same level, and rest on the same earth; and by that extremity they are as low as we are, as the meanest folk, as infants, and as the beasts.

104

When our passion leads us to do something, we forget our duty; for example, we like a book and read it, when we ought to be doing something else. Now, to remind ourselves of our duty, we must set ourselves a task we dislike; we then plead that we have something else to do, and by this means remember our duty.

105

How difficult it is to submit anything to the judgment of another, without prejudicing his judgment by the manner in which we submit it! If we say, “I think it beautiful,” “I think it obscure,” or the like, we either entice the imagination into that view, or irritate it to the contrary. It is better to say nothing; and then the other judges according to what really is, that is to say, according as it then is, and according as the other circumstances, not of our making, have placed it. But we at least shall have added nothing, unless it be that silence also produces an effect, according to the turn and the interpretation which the other will be disposed to give it, or as he will guess it from gestures or countenance, or from the tone of the voice, if he is a physiognomist. So difficult is it not to upset a judgment from its natural place, or, rather, so rarely is it firm and stable!

106

By knowing each man’s ruling passion, we are sure of pleasing him; and yet each has his fancies, opposed to his true good, in the very idea which he has of the good. It is a singularly puzzling fact.

107

Lustravit lampade terras.[15] — The weather and my mood have little connection. I have my foggy and my fine days within me; my prosperity or misfortune has little to do with the matter. I sometimes struggle against

luck, the glory of mastering it makes me master it gaily; whereas I am sometimes surfeited in the midst of good fortune.

108

Although people may have no interest in what they are saying, we must not absolutely conclude from this that they are not lying; for there are some people who lie for the mere sake of lying.

109

When we are well we wonder what we would do if we were ill, but when we are ill we take medicine cheerfully; the illness persuades us to do so. We have no longer the passions and desires for amusements and promenades which health gave to us, but which are incompatible with the necessities of illness. Nature gives us, then, passions and desires suitable to our present state. We are only troubled by the fears which we, and not nature, give ourselves, for they add to the state in which we are the passions of the state in which we are not.

As nature makes us always unhappy in every state, our desires picture to us a happy state; because they add to the state in which we are the pleasures of the state in which we are not. And if we attained to these pleasures, we should not be happy after all; because we should have other desires natural to this new state.

We must particularise this general proposition.…

110

The consciousness of the falsity of present pleasures, and the ignorance of the vanity of absent pleasures, cause inconstancy.

111

Inconstancy. — We think we are playing on ordinary organs when playing upon man. Men are organs, it is true, but, odd, changeable, variable [with pipes not arranged in proper order]. Those who only know how to play on ordinary organs will not produce harmonies on these. We must know where [the keys] are.

112

Inconstancy. — Things have different qualities, and the soul different inclinations; for nothing is simple which is presented to the soul, and the soul never presents itself simply to any object. Hence it comes that we weep and laugh at the same thing.

113

Inconstancy and oddity. — To live only by work, and to rule over the most powerful State in the world, are very opposite things. They are united in the person of the great Sultan of the Turks.

114

Variety is as abundant as all tones of the voice, all ways of walking, coughing, blowing the nose, sneezing. We distinguish vines by their fruit, and call them the Condrien, the Desargues, and such and such a stock. Is this all? Has a vine ever produced two bunches exactly the same, and has a bunch two grapes alike? &c.

I can never judge of the same thing exactly in the same way. I cannot judge of my work, while doing it. I must do as the artists, stand at a distance, but not too far. How far, then? Guess.

115

Variety. — Theology is a science, but at the same time how many sciences? A man is a whole; but if we dissect him, will he be the head, the heart, the stomach, the veins, each vein, each portion of a vein, the blood, each humour in the blood?

A town, a country-place, is from afar a town and a country-place. But, as we draw near, there are houses, trees, tiles, leaves, grass, ants, limbs of ants, in infinity. All this is contained under the name of country-place.

116

Thoughts. — All is one, all is different. How many natures exist in man? How many vocations? And by what chance does each man ordinarily choose what he has heard praised? A well-turned heel.

117

The heel of a slipper.— "Ah! How well this is turned! Here is a clever workman! How brave is this soldier!" This is the source of our inclinations, and of the choice of conditions. "How much this man drinks! How little that one!" This makes people sober or drunk, soldiers, cowards, &c.

118

Chief talent, that which rules the rest.

119

Nature imitates herself. A seed sown in good ground brings forth fruit. A principle, instilled into a good mind, brings forth fruit. Numbers imitate space, which is of a different nature.

All is made and led by the same master, root, branches, and fruits; principles and consequences.

120

[Nature diversifies and imitates; art imitates and diversifies.]

121

Nature always begins the same things again, the years, the days, the hours; in like manner spaces and numbers follow each other from beginning to end. Thus is made a kind of infinity and eternity. Not that anything in all this is infinite and eternal, but these finite realities are infinitely multiplied. Thus it seems to me to be only the number which multiplies them that is infinite.

122

Time heals griefs and quarrels, for we change and are no longer the same persons. Neither the offender nor the offended are any more themselves. It is like a nation which we have provoked, but meet again after two generations. They are still Frenchmen, but not the same.

123

He no longer loves the person whom he loved ten years ago. I quite believe it. She is no longer the same, nor is he. He was young, and she also; she is quite different. He would perhaps love her yet, if she were what she was then.

124

We view things not only from different sides, but with different eyes; we have no wish to find them alike.

125

Contraries. — Man is naturally credulous and incredulous, timid and rash.

126

Description of man: dependency, desire of independence, need.

127

Condition of man: inconstancy, weariness, unrest.

128

The weariness which is felt by us in leaving pursuits to which we are attached. A man dwells at home with pleasure; but if he sees a woman who charms him, or if he enjoys himself in play for five or six days, he is miserable if he returns to his former way of living. Nothing is more common than that.

129

Our nature consists in motion; complete rest is death.

130

Restlessness. — If a soldier, or labourer, complain of the hardship of his lot, set him to do nothing.

131

Weariness. — Nothing is so insufferable to man as to be completely at rest, without passions, without business, without diversion, without study. He then feels his nothingness, his forlornness, his insufficiency, his dependence, his weakness, his emptiness. There will immediately arise from the depth of his heart weariness, gloom, sadness, fretfulness, vexation, despair.

132

Methinks Cæsar was too old to set about amusing himself with conquering the world. Such sport was good for Augustus or Alexander. They were still young men, and thus difficult to restrain. But Cæsar should have been more mature.

133

Two faces which resemble each other, make us laugh, when together, by their resemblance, though neither of them by itself makes us laugh.

134

How useless is painting, which attracts admiration by the resemblance of things, the originals of which we do not admire!

135

The struggle alone pleases us, not the victory. We love to see animals fighting, not the victor infuriated over the vanquished. We would only see the victorious end; and, as soon as it comes, we are satiated. It is the same in play, and the same in the search for truth. In disputes we like to see the clash of opinions, but not at all to contemplate truth when found. To observe it with pleasure, we have to see it emerge out of strife. So in the passions, there is pleasure in seeing the collision of two contraries; but when one acquires the mastery, it becomes only brutality. We never seek things for themselves, but for the search. Likewise in plays, scenes which do not rouse the emotion of fear are worthless, so are extreme and hopeless misery, brutal lust, and extreme cruelty.

136

A mere trifle consoles us, for a mere trifle distresses us.

137

Without examining every particular pursuit, it is enough to comprehend them under diversion.

138

Men naturally slaters and of all callings, save in their own rooms.

139

Diversion. — When I have occasionally set myself to consider the different distractions of men, the pains and perils to which they expose themselves at court or in war, whence arise so many quarrels, passions, bold and often bad ventures, &c., I have discovered that all the unhappiness of men arises from one single fact, that they cannot stay quietly in their own chamber. A man who has enough to live on, if he knew how to stay with pleasure at home, would not leave it to go to sea or to besiege a town. A commission in the army would not be bought so dearly, but that it is found insufferable not to budge from the town; and men only seek conversation and entering games, because they cannot remain with pleasure at home.

But on further consideration, when, after finding the cause of all our ills, I have sought to discover the reason of it, I have found that there is one very real reason, namely, the natural poverty of our feeble and mortal condition, so miserable that nothing can comfort us when we think of it closely.

Whatever condition we picture to ourselves, if we muster all the good things which it is possible to possess, royalty is the finest position in the world. Yet, when we imagine a king attended with every pleasure he can feel, if he be without diversion, and be left to consider and reflect on what he is, this feeble happiness will not sustain him; he will necessarily fall into forebodings of dangers, of revolutions which may happen, and, finally, of death and inevitable disease; so that if he be without what is called diversion, he is unhappy, and more unhappy than the least of his subjects who plays and diverts himself.

Hence it comes that play and the society of women, war, and high posts, are so sought after. Not that there is in fact any happiness in them, or that men imagine true bliss to consist in money won at play, or in the hare which they hunt; we would not take these as a gift. We do not seek that easy and peaceful lot which permits us to think of our unhappy condition, nor the dangers of war, nor the labour of office, but the bustle which averts these thoughts of ours, and amuses us.

Reasons why we like the chase better than the quarry.

Hence it comes that men so much love noise and stir; hence it comes that the prison is so horrible a punishment; hence it comes that the pleasure of solitude is a thing incomprehensible. And it is in fact the greatest source of happiness in the condition of kings, that men try incessantly to divert them, and to procure for them all kinds of pleasures.

The king is surrounded by persons whose only thought is to divert the king, and to prevent his thinking of self. For he is unhappy, king though he be, if he think of himself.

This is all that men have been able to discover to make themselves happy. And those who philosophise on the matter, and who think men unreasonable for spending a whole day in chasing a hare which they would not have bought, scarce know our nature. The hare in itself would not screen us from the sight of death and calamities; but the chase which turns away our attention from these, does screen us.

The advice given to Pyrrhus to take the rest which he was about to seek with so much labour, was full of difficulties.

[To bid a man live quietly is to bid him live happily. It is to advise him to be in a state perfectly happy, in which he can think at leisure without finding therein a cause of distress. This is to misunderstand nature.

As men who naturally understand their own condition avoid nothing so much as rest, so there is nothing they leave undone in seeking turmoil. Not that they have an instinctive knowledge of true happiness.…

So we are wrong in blaming them. Their error does not lie in seeking excitement, if they seek it only as a diversion; the evil is that they seek it as if the possession of the objects of their quest would make them really

happy. In this respect it is right to call their quest a vain one. Hence in all this both the censurers and the censured do not understand man's true nature.]

And thus, when we take the exception against them, that what they seek with such fervour cannot satisfy them, if they replied — as they should do if they considered the matter thoroughly — that they sought in it only a violent and impetuous occupation which turned their thoughts from self, and that they therefore chose an attractive object to charm and ardently attract them, they would leave their opponents without a reply. But they do not make this reply, because they do not know themselves. They do not know that it is the chase, and not the quarry, which they seek.

[Dancing: we must consider rightly where to place our feet.

— A gentleman sincerely believes that hunting is great and royal sport; but a beater is not of this opinion.]

They imagine that if they obtained such a post, they would then rest with pleasure, and are insensible of the insatiable nature of their desire. They think they are truly seeking quiet, and they are only seeking excitement.

They have a secret instinct which impels them to seek amusement and occupation abroad, and which arises from the sense of their constant unhappiness. They have another secret instinct, a remnant of the greatness of our original nature, which teaches them that happiness in reality consists only in rest, and not in stir. And of these two contrary instincts they form within themselves a confused idea, which hides itself from their view in the depths of their soul, inciting them to aim at rest through excitement, and always to fancy that the satisfaction which they have not will come to them, if, by surmounting whatever difficulties confront them, they can thereby open the door to rest.

Thus passes away all man's life. Men seek rest in a struggle against difficulties; and when they have conquered these, rest becomes insufferable. For we think either of the misfortunes we have or of those which threaten us. And even if we should see ourselves sufficiently sheltered on all sides, weariness of its own accord would not fail to arise from the depths of the heart wherein it has its natural roots, and to fill the mind with its poison.

Thus so wretched is man that he would weary even without any cause for weariness from the peculiar state of his disposition; and so frivolous is he, that, though full of a thousand reasons for weariness, the least thing, such as playing billiards or hitting a ball, is sufficient to amuse him.

But will you say what object has he in all this? The pleasure of bragging to-morrow among his friends that he has played better than another. So others sweat in their own rooms to show to the learned that they have solved a problem in algebra, which no one had hitherto been able to solve. Many more expose themselves to extreme perils, in my opinion as foolishly, in order to boast afterwards that they have captured a town. Lastly, others wear themselves out in studying all these things, not in order to become wiser, but only in order to prove that they know them; and these are the most senseless of the band, since they are so knowingly, whereas one may suppose of the others, that if they knew it, they would no longer be foolish.

This man spends his life without weariness in playing every day for a small stake. Give him each morning the money he can win each day, on condition he does not play; you make him miserable. It will perhaps be said that he seeks the amusement of play and not the winnings. Make him then play for nothing; he will not become excited over it, and will feel bored. It is then not the amusement alone that he seeks; a languid and passionless amusement will weary him. He must get excited over it, and deceive himself by the fancy that he will be happy to win what he would not have as a gift on condition of not playing; and he must make for himself an object of passion, and excite over it his desire, his anger, his fear, to obtain his imagined end, as children are frightened at the face they have blackened.

Whence comes it that this man, who lost his only son a few months ago, or who this morning was in such trouble through being distressed by lawsuits and quarrels, now no longer thinks of them? Do not wonder; he is quite taken up in looking out for the boar which his dogs have been hunting so hotly for the last six hours. He requires nothing more. However full of sadness a man may be, he is happy for the time, if you can prevail upon him to enter into some amusement; and however happy a man may be, he will soon be discontented and wretched, if he be not diverted and occupied by some passion or pursuit which prevents weariness from overcoming him. Without amusement there is no joy; with amusement there is no sadness. And this also constitutes the happiness of persons in high position, that they have a number of people to amuse them, and have the power to keep themselves in this state.

Consider this. What is it to be superintendent, chancellor, first president, but to be in a condition wherein from early morning a large number of people come from all quarters to see them, so as not to leave them an hour in the day in which they can think of themselves? And when they are in disgrace and sent back to their country houses, where they lack neither wealth nor servants to help them on occasion, they do not fail to be wretched and desolate, because no one prevents them from thinking of themselves.

140

[How does it happen that this man, so distressed at the death of his wife and his only son, or who has some great lawsuit which annoys him, is not at this moment sad, and that he seems so free from all painful and disquieting thoughts? We need not wonder; for a ball has been served him, and he must return it to his companion. He is occupied in catching it in its fall from the roof, to win a game. How can he think of his own affairs, pray, when he has this other matter in hand? Here is a care worthy of occupying this great soul, and taking away from him every other thought of the mind. This man, born to know the universe, to judge all causes, to govern a whole state, is altogether occupied and taken up with the business of catching a hare. And if he does not lower himself to this, and wants always to be on the strain, he will be more foolish still, because he would raise himself above humanity; and after all he is only a man, that is to say capable of little and of much, of all and of nothing; he is neither angel nor brute, but man.]

141

Men spend their time in following a ball or a hare; it is the pleasure even of kings.

142

Diversion. — Is not the royal dignity sufficiently great in itself to make its possessor happy by the mere contemplation of what he is? Must he be diverted from this thought like ordinary folk? I see well that a man is made happy by diverting him from the view of his domestic sorrows so as to occupy all his thoughts with the care of dancing well. But will it be the same with a king, and will he be happier in the pursuit of these idle amusements than in the contemplation of his greatness? And what more satisfactory object could be presented to his mind? Would it not be a deprivation of his delight for him to occupy his soul with the thought of how to adjust his steps to the cadence of an air, or of how to throw a [ball] skilfully, instead of

leaving it to enjoy quietly the contemplation of the majestic glory which encompasses him? Let us make the trial; let us leave a king all alone to reflect on himself quite at leisure, without any gratification of the senses, without any care in his mind, without society; and we will see that a king without diversion is a man full of wretchedness. So this is carefully avoided, and near the persons of kings there never fail to be a great number of people who see to it that amusement follows business, and who watch all the time of their leisure to supply them with delights and games, so that there is no blank in it. In fact, kings are surrounded with persons who are wonderfully attentive in taking care that the king be not alone and in a state to think of himself, knowing well that he will be miserable, king though he be, if he meditate on self.

In all this I am not talking of Christian kings as Christians, but only as kings.

143

Diversion. — Men are entrusted from infancy with the care of their honour, their property, their friends, and even with the property and the honour of their friends. They are overwhelmed with business, with the study of languages, and with physical exercise; and they are made to understand that they cannot be happy unless their health, their honour, their fortune and that of their friends be in good condition, and that a single thing wanting will make them unhappy. Thus they are given cares and business which make them bustle about from break of day. — It is, you will exclaim, a strange way to make them happy! What more could be done to make them miserable? — Indeed! what could be done? We should only have to relieve them from all these cares; for then they would see themselves: they would reflect on what they are, whence they came, whither they go, and thus we cannot employ and divert them too much. And this is why, after having given them so much business, we advise them, if they have some time for relaxation, to employ it in amusement, in play, and to be always fully occupied.

How hollow and full of ribaldry is the heart of man!

144

I spent a long time in the study of the abstract sciences, and was disheartened by the small number of fellow-students in them. When I commenced the study of man, I saw that these abstract sciences are not suited to man, and that I was wandering farther from my own state in examining them, than others in not knowing

them. I pardoned their little knowledge; but I thought at least to find many companions in the study of man, and that it was the true study which is suited to him. I have been deceived; still fewer study it than geometry. It is only from the want of knowing how to study this that we seek the other studies. But is it not that even here is not the knowledge which man should have, and that for the purpose of happiness it is better for him not to know himself?

145

[One thought alone occupies us; we cannot think of two things at the same time. This is lucky for us according to the world, not according to God.]

146

Man is obviously made to think. It is his whole dignity and his whole merit; and his whole duty is to think as he ought. Now, the order of thought is to begin with self, and with its Author and its end.

Now, of what does the world think? Never of this, but of dancing, playing the lute, singing, making verses, running at the ring, &c., fighting, making oneself king, without thinking what it is to be a king and what to be a man.

147

We do not content ourselves with the life we have in ourselves and in our own being; we desire to live an imaginary life in the mind of others, and for this purpose we endeavour to shine. We labour unceasingly to adorn and preserve this imaginary existence, and neglect the real. And if we possess calmness, or generosity, or truthfulness, we are eager to make it known, so as to attach these virtues to that imaginary existence. We would rather separate them from ourselves to join them to it; and we would willingly be cowards in order to acquire the reputation of being brave. A great proof of the nothingness of our being, not to be satisfied with the one without the other, and to renounce the one for the other! For he would be infamous who would not die to preserve his honour.

148

We are so presumptuous that we would wish to be known by all the world, even by people who shall come after, when we shall be no more; and we are so vain that the esteem of five or six neighbours delights and contents us.

149

We do not trouble ourselves about being esteemed in the towns through which we pass. But if we are to remain a little while there, we are so concerned. How long is necessary? A time commensurate with our vain and paltry life.

150

Vanity is so anchored in the heart of man that a soldier, a soldier's servant, a cook, a porter brags, and wishes to have his admirers. Even philosophers wish for them. Those who write against it want to have the glory of having written well; and those who read it desire the glory of having read it. I who write this have perhaps this desire, and perhaps those who will read it…

151

Glory. — Admiration spoils all from infancy. Ah! How well said! Ah! How well done! How well-behaved he is! &c.

The children of Port-Royal, who do not receive this stimulus of envy and glory, fall into carelessness.

152

Pride. — Curiosity is only vanity. Most frequently we wish to know but to talk. Otherwise we would not take a sea voyage in order never to talk of it, and for the sole pleasure of seeing without hope of ever communicating it.

153

Of the desire of being esteemed by those with whom we are. — Pride takes such natural possession of us in the midst of our woes, errors, &c. We even lose our life with joy, provided people talk of it.

Vanity: play, hunting, visiting, false shame, a lasting name.

154

[I have no friends] to your advantage].

155

A true friend is so great an advantage, even for the greatest lords, in order that he may speak well of them, and back them in their absence, that they should do all to have one. But they should choose well; for, if they spend all their efforts in the interests of fools, it will be of no use, however well these may speak of them; and these will not even speak well of them if they find themselves on the weakest side, for they have no influence; and thus they will speak ill of them in company.

156

Ferox gens, nullam esse vitam sine armis rati.[16] — They prefer death to peace; others prefer death to war.

Every opinion may be held preferable to life, the love of which is so strong and so natural.

157

Contradiction: contempt for our existence, to die for nothing, hatred of our existence.

158

Pursuits. — The charm of fame is so great, that we like every object to which it is attached, even death.

159

Noble deeds are most estimable when hidden. When I see some of these in history (as p. 184), they please me greatly. But after all they have not been quite hidden, since they have been known; and though people have done what they could to hide them, the little publication of them spoils all, for what was best in them was the wish to hide them.

160

Sneezing absorbs all the functions of the soul, as well as work does; but we do not draw therefrom the same conclusions against the greatness of man, because it is against his will. And although we bring it on ourselves, it is nevertheless against our will that we sneeze. It is not in view of the act itself; it is for another end. And thus it is not a proof of the weakness of man, and of his slavery under that action.

It is not disgraceful for man to yield to pain, and it is disgraceful to yield to pleasure. This is not because pain comes to us from without, and we ourselves seek pleasure; for it is possible to seek pain, and yield to it purposely, without this kind of baseness. Whence comes it, then, that reason thinks it honourable to succumb under stress of pain, and disgraceful to yield to the attack of pleasure? It is because pain does not tempt and attract us. It is we ourselves who choose it voluntarily, and will it to prevail over us. So that we are masters of the situation; and in this man yields to himself. But in pleasure it is man who yields to pleasure. Now only mastery and sovereignty bring glory, and only slavery brings shame.

161

Vanity. — How wonderful it is that a thing so evident as the vanity of the world is so little known, that it is a strange and surprising thing to say that it is foolish to seek greatness!

162

He who will know fully the vanity of man has only to consider the causes and effects of love. The cause is *I know not what* (Corneille), and the effects are dreadful. This *I know not what,* so small an object that we cannot recognise it, agitates a whole country, princes, armies, the entire world.

Cleopatra's nose: had it been shorter, the whole aspect of the world would have been altered.

163

Vanity. — The cause and the effects of love: Cleopatra.

164

He who does not see the vanity of the world is himself very vain. Indeed who do not see it but youths who are absorbed in fame, diversion, and the thought of the future? But take away diversion, and you will see them dried up with weariness. They feel then their nothingness without knowing it; for it is indeed to be unhappy to be in insufferable sadness as soon as we are reduced to thinking of self, and have no diversion.

165

Thoughts. — In omnibus requiem quæsivi.[17] If our condition were truly happy, we would not need diversion from thinking of it in order to make ourselves happy.

166

Diversion. — Death is easier to bear without thinking of it, than is the thought of death without peril.

167

The miseries of human life have established all this: as men have seen this, they have taken up diversion.

168

Diversion. — As men are not able to fight against death, misery, ignorance, they have taken it into their heads, in order to be happy, not to think of them at all.

169

Despite these miseries, man wishes to be happy, and only wishes to be happy, and cannot wish not to be so. But how will he set about it? To be happy he would have to make himself immortal; but, not being able to do so, it has occurred to him to prevent himself from thinking of death.

170

Diversion. — If man were happy, he would be the more so, the less he was diverted, like the Saints and God. — Yes; but is it not to be happy to have a faculty of being amused by diversion? — No; for that comes from elsewhere and from without, and thus is dependent, and therefore subject to be disturbed by a thousand accidents, which bring inevitable griefs.

171

Misery. — The only thing which consoles us for our miseries is diversion, and yet this it the greatest of our miseries. For it is this which principally hinders us from reflecting upon ourselves, and which makes us insensibly ruin ourselves. Without this we should be in a state of weariness, and this weariness would spur us to seek a more solid means of escaping from it. But diversion amuses us, and leads us unconsciously to death.

172

We do not rest satisfied with the present. We anticipate the future as too slow in coming, as if in order to hasten its course; or we recall the past, to stop its too rapid flight. So imprudent are we that we wander in the times which are not ours, and do not think of the only one which belongs to us; and so idle are we that we dream of those times which are no more, and thoughtlessly overlook that which alone exists. For the present is generally painful to us. We conceal it from our sight, because it troubles us; and if it be delightful to us, we regret to see it pass away. We try to sustain it by the future, and think of arranging matters which are not in our power, for a time which we have no certainty of reaching.

Let each one examine his thoughts, and he will find them all occupied with the past and the future. We scarcely ever think of the present; and if we think of it, it is only to take light from it to arrange the future. The present is never our end. The past and the present are our means; the future alone is our end. So we never live, but we hope to live; and, as we are always preparing to be happy, it is inevitable we should never be so.

173

They say that eclipses foretoken misfortune, because misfortunes are common, so that, as evil happens so often, they often foretell it; whereas if they said that they predict good fortune, they would often be wrong. They attribute good fortune only to rare conjunctions of the heavens; so they seldom fail in prediction.

174

Misery. — Solomon and Job have best known and best spoken of the misery of man; the former the most fortunate, and the latter the most unfortunate of men; the former knowing the vanity of pleasures from experience, the latter the reality of evils.

175

We know ourselves so little, that many think they are about to die when they are well, and many think they are well when they are near death, unconscious of approaching fever, or of the abscess ready to form itself.

176

Cromwell was about to ravage all Christendom; the royal family was undone, and his own for ever established, save for a little grain of sand which formed in his ureter. Rome herself was trembling under him; but this small piece of gravel having formed there, he is dead, his family cast down, all is peaceful, and the king is restored.

177

[Three hosts.] Would he who had possessed the friendship of the King of England, the King of Poland, and the Queen of Sweden, have believed he would lack a refuge and shelter in the world?

178

Macrobius: on the innocents slain by Herod.

179

When Augustus learnt that Herod's own son was amongst the infants under two years of age, whom he had caused to be slain, he said that it was better to be Herod's pig than his son. — Macrobius, *Sat.*, book ii, chap. 4.

180

The great and the humble have the same misfortunes, the same griefs, the same passions; but the one is at the top of the wheel, and the other near the centre, and so less disturbed by the same revolutions.

181

We are so unfortunate that we can only take pleasure in a thing on condition of being annoyed if it turn out ill, as a thousand things can do, and do every hour. He who should find the secret of rejoicing in the good, without troubling himself with its contrary evil, would have hit the mark. It is perpetual motion.

182

Those who have always good hope in the midst of misfortunes, and who are delighted with good luck, are suspected of being very pleased with the ill success of the affair, if they are not equally distressed by bad luck; and they are overjoyed to find these pretexts of hope, in order to show that they are concerned and to conceal by the joy which they feign to feel that which they have at seeing the failure of the matter.

183

We run carelessly to the precipice, after we have put something before us to prevent us seeing it.

ENDNOTES.

[1] Montaigne's adopted daughter, who defends him in a Preface which she added to his Essays.

[2] "Animals run."

[3] "Concerning everything knowable" — the title under which Pico della Mirandola announced the 900 propositions which he undertook to defend in 1486.

[4] “Benefits are pleasant while it seems possible to requite them; when they become much greater, they produce hatred rather than gratitude.” — Tacitus.

[5] “The manner in which spirits are united to bodies cannot be understood by men, yet such is man.” — St. Augustine.

[6] “Happy he who could understand the causes of things.” — Virgil.

[7] “To wonder at nothing is almost the only thing which can make and keep a man happy.” — Horace.

[8] References to Montaignes’s Essays, ii. 12.

[9] “On opinion, queen of the world.” The book has not been certainly identified.

[10] “As if anything more unfortunate could happen to a man ruled by his own fancies.”

[11] “What a man sees often he does not wonder at, although he knows not why it happens; if something occurs which he has not seen before, he thinks it a marvel.”

[12] “Verily, that man will have uttered great trifles with huge effort.”—Terence.

[13] “Spots on the sun.”

[14] “All animal.”

[15] “He has illuminated the earth with a lamp.”

[16] “A fierce people, who thought life was nothing without arms.” — Livy.

[17] “In all things I have sought rest.”

SECTION III. Of the Necessity of the Wager

184



A LETTER TO incite to the search after God.

And then to make people seek Him among the philosophers, sceptics, and dogmatists, who disquiet him who inquires of them.

185

The conduct of God, who disposes all things kindly, is to put religion into the mind by reason, and into the heart by grace. But to will to put it into the mind and heart by force and threats is not to put religion there, but terror, *terorrem potius quam religionem*.

186

Nisi terrerentur et non docerentur, improba quasi dominatio videretur (Aug., E or 49). *Contra mendacium ad Consentium*.

187

Order. — Men despise religion; they hate it, and fear it is true. To remedy this, we must begin by showing that religion is not contrary to reason; that it is venerable, to inspire respect for it; then we must make it lovable, to make good men hope it is true; finally, we must prove it is true.

Venerable, because it has perfect knowledge of man; lovable, because it promises the true good.

188

In every dialogue and discourse, we must be able to say to those who take offence, “Of what do you complain?”

189

To begin by pitying unbelievers; they are wretched enough by their condition. We ought only to revile them where it is beneficial; but this does them harm.

190

To pity atheists who seek, for are they not unhappy enough? To inveigh against those who make a boast of it.

191

And will this one scoff at the other? Who ought to scoff? And yet, the latter does not scoff at the other, but pities him.

192

To reproach Miton with not being troubled, since God will reproach him.

193

Quid fiet hominibus qui minima contemnunt, majora non credunt.

194

…Let them at least learn what is the religion they attack, before attacking it. If this religion boasted of having a clear view of God, and of possessing it open and unveiled, it would be attacking it to say that we see nothing in the world which shows it with this clearness. But since, on the contrary, it says that men are in darkness and estranged from God, that He has hidden Himself from their knowledge, that this is in fact the name which He gives Himself in the Scriptures,

Deus absconditus; and finally, if it endeavours equally to establish these two things: that God has set up in the Church visible signs to make Himself known to those who should seek Him sincerely, and that He has nevertheless so disguised them that He will only be perceived by those who seek Him with all their heart; what advantage can they obtain, when, in the negligence with which they make profession of being in search of the truth, they cry out that nothing reveals it to them; and since that darkness in which they are, and with which they upbraid the Church, establishes only one of the things which she affirms, without touching the other, and, very far from destroying, proves her doctrine?

In order to attack it, they should have protested that they had made every effort to seek Him everywhere, and even in that which the Church proposes for their instruction, but without satisfaction. If they talked in this manner, they would in truth be attacking one of her pretensions. But I hope here to show that no reasonable person can speak thus, and I venture even to say that no one has ever done so. We know well enough how those who are of this mind behave. They believe they have made great efforts for their instruction, when they have spent a few hours in reading some book of Scripture, and have questioned some priest on the truths of the faith. After that, they boast of having made vain search in books and among men. But, verily, I will tell them what I have often said, that this negligence is insufferable. We are not here concerned with the trifling interests of some stranger, that we should treat it in this fashion; the matter concerns ourselves and our all.

The immortality of the soul is a matter which is of so great consequence to us, and which touches us so profoundly, that we must have lost all feeling to be indifferent as to knowing what it is. All our actions and thoughts must take such different courses, according as there are or are not eternal joys to hope for, that it is impossible to take one step with sense and judgment, unless we regulate our course by our view of this point which ought to be our ultimate end.

Thus our first interest and our first duty is to enlighten ourselves on this subject, whereon depends all our conduct. Therefore among those who do not

believe, I make a vast difference between those who strive with all their power to inform themselves, and those who live without troubling or thinking about it.

I can have only compassion for those who sincerely bewail their doubt, who regard it as the greatest of misfortunes, and who, sparing no effort to escape it, make of this inquiry their principal and most serious occupation.

But as for those who pass their life without thinking of this ultimate end of life, and who, for this sole reason that they do not find within themselves the lights which convince them of it, neglect to seek them elsewhere, and to examine thoroughly whether this opinion is one of those which people receive with credulous simplicity, or one of those which, although obscure in themselves, have nevertheless a solid and immovable foundation, I look upon them in a manner quite different.

This carelessness in a matter which concerns themselves, their eternity, their all, moves me more to anger than pity; it astonishes and shocks me; it is to me monstrous. I do not say this out of the pious zeal of a spiritual devotion. I expect, on the contrary, that we ought to have this feeling from principles of human interest and self-love; for this we need only see what the least enlightened persons see.

We do not require great education of the mind to understand that here is no real and lasting satisfaction; that our pleasures are only vanity; that our evils are infinite; and, lastly, that death, which threatens us every moment, must infallibly place us within a few years under the dreadful necessity of being for ever either annihilated or unhappy.

There is nothing more real than this, nothing more terrible. Be we as heroic as we like, that is the end which awaits the noblest life in the world. Let us reflect on this, and then say whether it is not beyond doubt that there is no good in this life but in the hope of another; that we are happy only in proportion as we draw near it; and that, as there are no more woes for those who have complete assurance of eternity, so there is no more happiness for those who have no insight into it.

Surely then it is a great evil thus to be in doubt, but it is at least an indispensable duty to seek when we are in such doubt; and thus the doubter who does not seek is altogether completely unhappy and completely wrong. And if besides this he is easy and content, professes to be so, and indeed boasts of it; if it is this state itself which is the subject of his joy and vanity, I have no words to describe so silly a creature.

How can people hold these opinions? What joy can we find in the expectation of nothing but hopeless misery? What reason for boasting that we are in impenetrable darkness? And how can it happen that the following argument occurs to a reasonable man?

"I know not who put me into the world, nor what the world is, nor what I myself am. I am in terrible ignorance of everything. I know not what my body is, nor my senses, nor my soul, not even that part of me which thinks what I say, which reflects on all and on itself, and knows itself no more than the rest. I see those frightful spaces of the universe which surround me, and I find myself tied to one corner of this vast expanse, without knowing why I am put in this place rather than in another, nor why the short time which is given me to live is assigned to me at this point rather than at another of the whole eternity which was before me or which shall come after me. I see nothing but infinites on all sides, which surround me as an atom, and as a shadow which endures only for an instant and returns no more. All I know is that I must soon die, but what I know least is this very death which I cannot escape.

"As I know not whence I come, so I know not whither I go. I know only that, in leaving this world, I fall for ever either into annihilation or into the hands of an angry God, without knowing to which of these two states I shall be for ever assigned. Such is my state, full of weakness and uncertainty. And from all this I conclude that I ought to spend all the days of my life without caring to inquire into what must happen to me. Perhaps I might find some solution to my doubts, but I will not take the trouble, nor take a step to seek it; and after treating with scorn those who are concerned with this care, I will go without foresight and

without fear to try the great event, and let myself be led carelessly to death, uncertain of the eternity of my future state."

Who would desire to have for a friend a man who talks in this fashion? Who would choose him out from others to tell him of his affairs? Who would have recourse to him in affliction? And indeed to what use in life could one put him?

In truth, it is the glory of religion to have for enemies men so unreasonable: and their opposition to it is so little dangerous that it serves on the contrary to establish its truths. For the Christian faith goes mainly to establish these two facts, the corruption of nature, and redemption by Jesus Christ. Now I contend that if these men do not serve to prove the truth of the redemption by the holiness of their behaviour, they at least serve admirably to show the corruption of nature by sentiments so unnatural.

Nothing is so important to man as his own state, nothing is so formidable to him as eternity; and thus it is not natural that there should be men indifferent to the loss of their existence, and to the perils of everlasting suffering. They are quite different with regard to all other things. They are afraid of mere trifles; they foresee them; they feel them. And this same man who spends so many days and nights in rage and despair for the loss of office, or for some imaginary insult to his honour, is the very one who knows without anxiety and without emotion that he will lose all by death. It is a monstrous thing to see in the same heart and at the same time this sensibility to trifles and this strange insensibility to the greatest objects. It is an incomprehensible enchantment, and a supernatural slumber, which indicates as its cause an all-powerful force.

There must be a strange confusion in the nature of man, that he should boast of being in that state in which it seems incredible that a single individual should be. However, experience has shown me so great a number of such persons that the fact would be surprising, if we did not know that the greater part of those who trouble themselves about the matter are disingenuous, and not in fact what they say. They are people who have heard it said that it is the fashion to be thus daring. It is what they call shaking off the yoke, and they try to imitate this. But it would

not be difficult to make them understand how greatly they deceive selves in thus seeking esteem. This is not the way to gain it, even I say among those men of the world who take a healthy view of things, and who know that the only way to succeed in this life is to make ourselves appear honourable, faithful, judicious, and capable of useful service to a friend; because naturally men love only what may be useful to them. Now, what do we gain by hearing it said of a man that he has now thrown off the yoke, that he does not believe there is a God who watches our actions, that he considers himself the sole master of his conduct, and that he thinks he is accountable for it only to himself? Does he think that he has thus brought us to have henceforth complete confidence in him, and to look to him for consolation, advice, and help in every need of life? Do they profess to have delighted us by telling us that they hold our soul to be only a little wind and smoke, especially by telling us this in a haughty and self-satisfied tone of voice? Is this a thing to say gaily? Is it not, on the contrary, a thing to say sadly, as the saddest thing in the world?

If they thought of it seriously, they would see that this is so bad a mistake, so contrary to good sense, so opposed to decency and so removed in every respect from that good breeding which they seek, that they would be more likely to correct than to pervert those who had an inclination to follow them. And indeed, make them give an account of their opinions, and of the reasons which they have for doubting religion, and they will say to you things so feeble and so petty, that they will persuade you of the contrary. The following is what a person one day said to such a one very appositely: “If you continue to talk in this manner, you will really make me religious.” And he was right, for who would not have a horror of holding opinions in which he would have such contemptible persons as companions!

Thus those who only feign these opinions would be very unhappy, if they restrained their natural feelings in order to make themselves the most conceited of men. If, at the bottom of their heart, they are troubled at not having more light, let them not disguise the fact; this avowal will not be shameful. The only shame is to

have none. Nothing reveals more an extreme weakness of mind than not to know the misery of a godless man. Nothing is more indicative of a bad disposition of heart than not to desire the truth of eternal promises. Nothing is more dastardly than to act with bravado before God. Let them then leave these impieties to those who are sufficiently ill-bred to be really capable of them. Let them at least be honest men, if they cannot be Christians. Finally, let them recognise that there are two kinds of people one can call reasonable; those who serve God with all their heart because they know Him, and those who seek Him with all their heart because they do not know Him.

But as for those who live without knowing Him and without seeking Him, they judge themselves so little worthy of their own care, that they are not worthy of the care of others; and it needs all the charity of the religion which they despise, not to despise them even to the point of leaving them to their folly. But because this religion obliges us always to regard them, so long as they are in this life, as capable of the grace which can enlighten them, and to believe that they may, in a little time, be more replenished with faith than we are, and that, on the other hand, we may fall into the blindness wherein they are, we must do for them what we would they should do for us if we were in their place, and call upon them to have pity upon themselves, and to take at least some steps in the endeavour to find light. Let them give to reading this some of the hours which they otherwise employ so uselessly; whatever aversion they may bring to the task, they will perhaps gain something, and at least will not lose much. But as for those who bring to the task perfect sincerity and a real desire to meet with truth, those I hope will be satisfied and convinced of the proofs of a religion so divine, which I have here collected, and in which I have followed somewhat after this order…

195

Before entering into the proofs of the Christian religion, I find it necessary to point out the sinfulness of those men who live in indifference to the search for

truth in a matter which is so important to them, and which touches them so nearly.

Of all their errors, this doubtless is the one which most convicts them of foolishness and blindness, and in which it is easiest to confound them by the first glimmerings of common sense, and by natural feelings.

For it is not to be doubted that the duration of this life is but a moment; that the state of death is eternal, whatever may be its nature; and that thus all our actions and thoughts must take such different directions according to the state of that eternity, that it is impossible to take one step with sense and judgment, unless we regulate our course by the truth of that point which ought to be our ultimate end.

There is nothing clearer than this; and thus, according to the principles of reason, the conduct of men is wholly unreasonable, if they do not take another course.

On this point, therefore, we condemn those who live without thought of the ultimate end of life, who let themselves be guided by their own inclinations and their own pleasures without reflection and without concern, and, as if they could annihilate eternity by turning away their thought from it, think only of making themselves happy for the moment.

Yet this eternity exists, and death, which must open into it, and threatens them every hour, must in a little time infallibly put them under the dreadful necessity of being either annihilated or unhappy for ever, without knowing which of these eternities is for ever prepared for them.

This is a doubt of terrible consequence. They are in peril of eternal woe; and thereupon, as if the matter were not worth the trouble, they neglect to inquire whether this is one of those opinions which people receive with too credulous a facility, or one of those which, obscure in themselves, have a very firm, though hidden, foundation. Thus they know not whether there be truth or falsity in the matter, nor whether there be strength or weakness in the proofs. They have them before their eyes; they refuse to look at them; and in that ignorance they choose all that is necessary to fall into this misfortune if it exists, to await death to make trial of it, yet to be very content in this state, to make profession of it, and indeed

to boast of it. Can we think seriously on the importance of this subject without being horrified at conduct so extravagant?

This resting in ignorance is a monstrous thing, and they who pass their life in it must be made to feel its extravagance and stupidity, by having it shown to them, so that they may be confounded by the sight of their folly. For this is how men reason, when they choose to live in such ignorance of what they are, and without seeking enlightenment. “I know not,” they say…

196

Men lack heart; they would not make a friend of it.

197

To be insensible to the extent of despising interesting things, and to become insensible to the point which interests us most.

198

The sensibility of man to trifles, and his insensibility to great things, indicates a strange inversion.

199

Let us imagine a number of men in chains, and all condemned to death, where some are killed each day in the sight of the others, and those who remain see their own fate in that of their fellows, and wait their turn, looking at each other sorrowfully and without hope. It is an image of the condition of men.

200

A man in a dungeon, ignorant whether his sentence be pronounced, and having only one hour to learn it, but this hour enough, if he know that it is pronounced, to

obtain its repeal, would act unnaturally in spending that hour, not in ascertaining his sentence, but in playing piquet. So it is against nature that man, &c. It is making heavy the hand of God.

Thus not only the zeal of those who seek Him proves God, but also the blindness of those who seek Him not.

201

All the objections of this one and that one only go against themselves, and not against religion. All that infidels say…

202

[From those who are in despair at being without faith, we see that God does not enlighten them; but as to the rest, we see there is a God who makes them blind.]

203

Fascinatio nugacitatis. — That passion may not harm us, let us act as if we had only eight hours to live.

204

If we ought to devote eight hours of life, we ought to devote a hundred years.

205

When I consider the short duration of my life, swallowed up in the eternity before and after, the little space which I fill, and even can see, engulfed in the infinite immensity of spaces of which I am ignorant, and which know me not, I am frightened, and am astonished at being here rather than there; for there is no reason why here rather than there, why now rather than then. Who has put me

here? By whose order and direction have this place and time been allotted to me? *Memoria hospitis unius diei prætereuntis.*

206

The eternal silence of these infinite spaces frightens me.

207

How many kingdoms know us not?

208

Why is my knowledge limited? Why my stature? Why my life to one hundred years rather than to a thousand? What reason has nature had for giving me such, and for choosing this number rather than another in the infinity of those from which there is no more reason to choose one than another, trying nothing else?

209

Art thou less a slave by being loved and favoured by thy master? Thou art indeed well off, slave. Thy master favours thee; he will soon beat thee.

210

The last act is tragic, however happy all the rest of the play is; at the last a little earth is thrown upon our head, and that is the end for ever.

211

We are fools to depend upon the society of our fellow-men. Wretched as we are, powerless as we are, they will not aid us; we shall die alone. We should therefore act as if we were alone, and in that case should we build fine houses, etc.? We

should seek the truth without hesitation; and, if we refuse it, we show that we value the esteem of men more than the search for truth.

212

Instability. — It is a horrible thing to feel all that we possess slipping away.

213

Between us and heaven or hell there is only life, which is the frailest thing in the world.

214

Injustice. — That presumption should be joined to meanness is extreme injustice.

215

To fear death without danger, and not in danger, for one must be a man.

216

Sudden death alone is feared; hence confessors stay with lords.

217

An heir finds the title-deeds of his house. Will he say, “Perhaps they are forged?” and neglect to examine them?

218

Dungeon. — I approve of not examining the opinion of Copernicus; but this…! It concerns all our life to know whether the soul be mortal or immortal.

219

It is certain that the mortality or immortality of the soul must make an entire difference to morality. And yet philosophers have constructed their ethics independently of this: they discuss to pass an hour.

Plato, to incline to Christianity.

220

The fallacy of philosophers who have not discussed the immortality of the soul. The fallacy of their dilemma in Montaigne.

221

Atheists ought to say what is perfectly evident; now it is not perfectly evident that the soul is material.

222

Atheists. — What reason have they for saying that we cannot rise from the dead? What is more difficult, to be born or to rise again; that what has never been should be, or that what has been should be again? Is it more difficult to come into existence than to return to it? Habit makes the one appear easy to us; want of habit makes the other impossible. A popular way of thinking!

Why cannot a virgin bear a child? Does a hen not lay eggs without a cock? What distinguishes these outwardly from others? And who has told us that the hen may not form the germ as well as the cock?

223

What have they to say against the resurrection, and against the child-bearing of the Virgin? Which is the more difficult, to produce a man or an animal, or to reproduce it? And if they had never seen any species of animals, could they have conjectured whether they were produced without connection with each other?

224

How I hate these follies of not believing in the Eucharist, &c.! If the Gospel be true, if Jesus Christ be God, what difficulty is there?

225

Atheism shows strength of mind, but only to a certain degree.

226

Infidels, who profess to follow reason, ought to be exceedingly strong in reason. What say they then? "Do we not see," say they, "that the brutes live and die like men, and Turks like Christians? They have their ceremonies, their prophets, their doctors, their saints, their monks, like us," &c. (Is this contrary to Scripture? Does it not say all this?)

If you care but little to know the truth, here is enough of it to leave you in repose. But if you desire with all your heart to know it, it is not enough; look at it in detail. This would be sufficient for a question in philosophy; but not here, where it concerns your all. And yet, after a trifling reflection of this kind, we go to amuse ourselves, &c. Let us inquire of this same religion whether it does not give a reason for this obscurity; perhaps it will teach it to us.

227

Order by dialogues. — What ought I to do? I see only darkness everywhere. Shall I believe I am nothing? Shall I believe I am God?

"All things change and succeed each other." You are mistaken; there is…

228

Objection of atheists: "But we have no light."

229

This is what I see and what troubles me. I look on all sides, and I see only darkness everywhere. Nature presents to me nothing which is not matter of doubt and concern. If I saw nothing there which revealed a Divinity, I would come to a negative conclusion; if I saw everywhere the signs of a Creator, I would remain peacefully in faith. But, seeing too much to deny and too little to be sure, I am in a state to be pitied; wherefore I have a hundred time wished that if a God maintains nature, she should testify to Him unequivocally, and that, if the signs she gives are deceptive, she should suppress them altogether; that she should say everything or nothing, that I might see which cause I ought to follow. Whereas in my present state, ignorant of what I am or of what I ought to do, I know neither my condition nor my duty. My heart inclines wholly to know where is the true good, in order to follow it; nothing would be too dear to me for eternity.

I envy those whom I see living in the faith with such carelessness, and who make such a bad use of a gift of which it seems to me I would make such a different use.

230

It is incomprehensible that God should exist, and it is incomprehensible that He should not exist; that the soul should be joined to the body, and that we should have no soul; that the world should be created, and that it should not be created, &c.; that original sin should be, and that it should not be.

231

Do you believe it to be impossible that God is infinite, without parts? — Yes. I wish therefore to show you an infinite and indivisible thing. It is a point moving everywhere with an infinite velocity; for it is one in all places, and is all totality in every place.

Let this effect of nature, which previously seemed to you impossible, make you know that there may be others of which you are still ignorant. Do not draw this conclusion from your experiment, that there remains nothing for you to know; but rather that there remains an infinity for you to know.

232

Infinite movement, the point which fills everything, the moment of rest; infinite without quantity, indivisible and infinite.

233

Infinite — nothing. — Our soul is cast into a body, where it finds number, time, dimension. Thereupon it reasons, and calls this nature, necessity, and can believe nothing else.

Unity joined to infinity adds nothing to it, no more than one foot to an infinite measure. The finite is annihilated in the presence of the infinite, and becomes a pure nothing. So our spirit before God, so our justice before divine justice. There is not so great a disproportion between our justice and that of God, as between unity and infinity.

The justice of God must be vast like His compassion. Now justice to the outcast is less vast, and ought less to offend our feelings than mercy towards the elect.

We know that there is an infinite, and are ignorant of its nature. As we know it to be false that numbers are finite, it is therefore true that there is an infinity in number. But we do not know what it is. It is false that it is even, it is false that it is odd; for the addition of a unit can make no change in its nature. Yet it is a number, and every number is odd or even (this is certainly true of every finite number). So we may well know that there is a God without knowing what He is. Is there not one substantial truth, seeing there are so many things which are not the truth itself?

We know then the existence and nature of the finite, because we also are finite and have extension. We know the existence of the infinite, and are ignorant of its nature, because it has extension like us, but not limits like us. But we know neither the existence nor the nature of God, because He has neither extension nor limits.

But by faith we know His existence; in glory we shall know His nature. Now, I have already shown that we may well know the existence of a thing, without knowing its nature.

Let us now speak according to natural lights.

If there is a God, He is infinitely incomprehensible, since, having neither parts nor limits, He has no affinity to us. We are then incapable of knowing either what He is or if He is. This being so, who will dare to undertake the decision of the question? Not we, who have no affinity to Him.

Who then will blame Christians for not being able to give a reason for their belief, since they profess a religion for which they cannot give a reason? They declare, in expounding it to the world, that it is a foolishness, *stultitiam*; and then you complain that they do not prove it! If they proved it, they would not keep their word; it is in lacking proofs, that they are not lacking in sense. “Yes, but although this excuses those who offer it as such, and takes away from them the blame of putting it forward without reason, it does not excuse those who receive it.” Let us then examine this point, and say, “God is, or He is not.” But to which side shall we incline? Reason can decide nothing here. There is an infinite chaos which separated us. A game is being played at the extremity of this infinite distance where heads or tails will turn up. What will you wager? According to reason, you can do neither the one thing nor the other; according to reason, you can defend neither of the propositions.

Do not then reprove for error those who have made a choice; for you know nothing about it. “No, but I blame them for having made, not this choice, but a choice; for again both he who chooses heads and he who chooses tails are equally at fault, they are both in the wrong. The true course is not to wager at all.”

—Yes; but you must wager. It is not optional. You are embarked. Which will you choose then? Let us see. Since you must choose, let us see which interests you least. You have two things to lose, the true and the good; and two things to stake, your reason and your will, your knowledge and your happiness; and your nature has two things to shun, error and misery. Your reason is no more shocked in choosing one rather than the other, since you must of necessity choose. This is one point settled. But your happiness? Let us weigh the gain and the loss in wagering that God is. Let us estimate these two chances. If you gain, you gain all; if you lose, you lose nothing. Wager, then, without hesitation that He is.— "That is very fine. Yes, I must wager; but I may perhaps wager too much." — Let us see. Since there is an equal risk of gain and of loss, if you had only to gain two lives, instead of one, you might still wager. But if there were three lives to gain, you would have to play (since you are under the necessity of playing), and you would be imprudent, when you are forced to play, not to chance your life to gain three at a game where there is an equal risk of loss and gain. But there is an eternity of life and happiness. And this being so, if there were an infinity of chances, of which one only would be for you, you would still be right in wagering one to win two, and you would act stupidly, being obliged to play, by refusing to stake one life against three at a game in which out of an infinity of chances there is one for you, if there were an infinity of an infinitely happy life to gain. But there is here an infinity of an infinitely happy life to gain, a chance of gain against a finite number of chances of loss, and what you stake is finite. It is all divided; wherever the infinite is and there is not an infinity of chances of loss against that of gain, there is no time to hesitate, you must give all. And thus, when one is forced to play, he must renounce reason to preserve his life, rather than risk it for infinite gain, as likely to happen as the loss of nothingness.

For it is no use to say it is uncertain if we will gain, and it is certain that we risk, and that the infinite distance between the *certainty* of what is staked and the *uncertainty* of what will be gained, equals the finite good which is certainly staked against the uncertain infinite. It is not so, as every player stakes a certainty

to gain an uncertainty, and yet he stakes a finite certainty to gain a finite uncertainty, without transgressing against reason. There is not an infinite distance between the certainty staked and the uncertainty of the gain; that is untrue. In truth, there is an infinity between the certainty of gain and the certainty of loss. But the uncertainty of the gain is proportioned to the certainty of the stake according to the proportion of the chances of gain and loss. Hence it comes that, if there are as many risks on one side as on the other, the course is to play even; and then the certainty of the stake is equal to the uncertainty of the gain, so far is it from fact that there is an infinite distance between them. And so our proposition is of infinite force, when there is the finite to stake in a game where there are equal risks of gain and of loss, and the infinite to gain. This is demonstrable; and if men are capable of any truths, this is one.

"I confess it, I admit it. But, still, is there no means of seeing the faces of the cards?" — Yes, Scripture and the rest, &c. "Yes, but I have my hands tied and my mouth closed; I am forced to wager, and am not free. I am not released, and am so made that I cannot believe. What, then, would you have me do?"

True. But at least learn your inability to believe, since reason brings you to this, and yet you cannot believe. Endeavour then to convince yourself, not by increase of proofs of God, but by the abatement of your passions. You would like to attain faith, and do not know the way; you would like to cure yourself of unbelief, and ask the remedy for it. Learn of those who have been bound like you, and who now stake all their possessions. These are people who know the way which you would follow, and who are cured of an ill of which you would be cured. Follow the way by which they began; by acting as if they believed, taking the holy water, having masses said, etc. Even this will naturally make you believe, and deaden your acuteness.— "But this is what I am afraid of." — And why? What have you to lose?

But to show you that this leads you there, it is this which will lessen the passions, which are your stumbling-blocks.

The end of this discourse. — Now, what harm will befall you in taking this side? You will be faithful, honest, humble, grateful, generous, a sincere friend, truthful. Certainly you will not have those poisonous pleasures, glory and luxury; but will you not have others? I will tell you that you will thereby gain in this life, and that, at each step you take on this road, you will see so great certainty of gain, so much nothingness in what you risk, that you will at last recognise that you have wagered for something certain and infinite, for which you have given nothing.

"Ah! This discourse transports me, charms me," &c.

If this discourse pleases you and seems impressive, know that it is made by a man who has knelt, both before and after it, in prayer to that Being, infinite and without parts, before whom he lays all he has, for you also to lay before Him all you have for your own good and for His glory, that so strength may be given to lowliness.

234

If we must not act save on a certainty, we ought not to act on religion, for it is not certain. But how many things we do on an uncertainty, sea voyages, battles! I say then we must do nothing at all, for nothing is certain, and that there is more certainty in religion than there is as to whether we may see to-morrow; for it is not certain that we may see to-morrow, and it is certainly possible that we may not see it. We cannot say as much about religion. It is not certain that it is; but who will venture to say that it is certainly possible that it is not? Now when we work for to-morrow, and so on an uncertainty, we act reasonably; for we ought to work for an uncertainty according to the doctrine of chance which was demonstrated above.

Saint Augustine has seen that we work for an uncertainty, on sea, in battle, &c. But he has not seen the doctrine of chance which proves that we should do so.

Montaigne has seen that we are shocked at a fool, and that habit is all-powerful; but he has not seen the reason of this effect.

All these persons have seen the effects, but they have not seen the causes. They are, in comparison with those who have discovered the causes, as those who have only eyes are in comparison with those who have intellect. For the effects are perceptible by sense, and the causes are visible only to the intellect. And although these effects are seen by the mind, this mind is, in comparison with the mind which sees the causes, as the bodily senses are in comparison with the intellect.

235

Rem viderunt, causam non viderunt.

236

According to the doctrine of chance, you ought to put yourself to the trouble of searching for the truth; for if you die without worshipping the True Cause, you are lost.— "But," say you, "if He had wished me to worship Him, He would have left me signs of His will." — He has done so; but you neglect them. Seek them, therefore; it is well worth it.

237

Chances. — We must live differently in the world, according to these different assumptions: — (1) that we could always remain in it; (2) that it is certain that we shall not remain here long, and uncertain if we shall remain here one hour. This last assumption is our condition.

238

What do you then promise me, in addition to certain troubles, but ten years of self-love (for ten years is the chance), to try hard to please without success?

239

Objection. — Those who hope for salvation are so far happy; but they have as a counterpoise the fear of hell.

Reply. — Who has most reason to fear hell: he who is in ignorance whether there is a hell, and who is certain of damnation if there is; or he who certainly believes there is a hell, and hopes to be saved if there is?

240

"I would soon have renounced pleasure," say they, "had I faith." For my part I tell you, "You would soon have faith, if you renounced pleasure." Now, it is for you to begin. If I could, I would give you faith. I cannot do so, nor therefore test the truth of what you say. But you can well renounce pleasure, and test whether what I say is true.

241

Order. — I would have far more fear of being mistaken, and of finding that the Christian religion was true, than of not being mistaken in believing it true.

SECTION IV. Of the Means of Belief

242



PREFACE TO THE second part. — To speak of those who have treated of this matter.

I admire the boldness with which these persons undertake to speak of God. In addressing their argument to infidels, their first chapter is to prove Divinity from the works of nature. I should not be astonished at their enterprise, if they were addressing their argument to the faithful; for it is certain that those who have the living faith in their heart see at once that all existence is none other than the work of the God whom they adore. But for those in whom this light is extinguished, and in whom we purpose to rekindle it, persons destitute of faith and grace, who, seeking with all their light whatever they see in nature that can bring them to this knowledge, find only obscurity and darkness; to tell them that they have only to look at the smallest things which surround them, and they will see God openly, to give them, as a complete proof of this great and important matter, the course of the moon and planets, and to claim to have concluded the proof with such an argument, is to give them ground for believing that the proofs of our religion are very weak. And I see by reason and experience that nothing is more calculated to arouse their contempt.

It is not after this manner that Scripture speaks, which has a better knowledge of the things that are of God. It says, on the contrary, that God is a hidden God, and that, since the corruption of nature, He has left men in a darkness from which they can escape only through Jesus Christ, without whom all communion with God is cut off. *Nemo novit Patrem, nisi Filius, et cui voluerit Filius revelare.*

This is what Scripture points out to us, when it says in so many places that those who seek God find Him. It is not of that light, "like the noonday sun," that this is said. We do not say that those who seek the noonday sun, or water in the sea, shall find them; and hence the evidence of God must not be of this nature. So it tells us elsewhere: *Vere tu es Deus absconditus*.

243

It is an astounding fact that no canonical writer has ever made use of nature to prove God. They all strive to make us believe in Him. David, Solomon, &c., have never said, "There is no void, therefore there is a God." They must have had more knowledge than the most learned people who came after them, and who have all made use of this argument. This is worthy of attention.

244

"Why! Do you not say yourself that the heavens and birds prove God?" No. "And does your religion not say so?" No. For although it is true in a sense for some souls to whom God gives this light, yet it is false with respect to the majority of men.

245

There are three sources of belief: reason, custom, inspiration. The Christian religion, which alone has reason, does not acknowledge as her true children those who believe without inspiration. It is not that she excludes reason and custom. On the contrary, the mind must be opened to proofs, must be confirmed by custom, and offer itself in humbleness to inspirations, which alone can produce a true and saving effect. *Ne evacuetur crux Christi.*

246

Order. — After the letter *that we ought to seek God*, to write the letter *on removing obstacles*; which is the discourse on "the machine," on preparing the machine, on seeking by reason.

247

Order. — A letter of exhortation to a friend to induce him to seek. And he will reply, "But what is the use of seeking? Nothing is seen." Then to reply to him, "Do not despair." And he will answer that he would be glad to find some light, but that, according to this very religion, if he believed in it, it will be of no use to him, and that therefore he prefers not to seek. And to answer to that: The machine.

248

A Letter which indicates the use of proofs by the machine. — Faith is different from proof; the one is human, the other is a gift of God. *Justus ex fide vivit.* It is this faith that God Himself puts into the heart, of which the proof is often the instrument, *fides ex auditu*; but this faith is in the heart, and makes us not say *scio*, but *credo*.

249

It is superstition to put one's hope in formalities; but it is pride to be unwilling to submit to them.

250

The external must be joined to the internal to obtain anything from God, that is to say, we must kneel, pray with the lips, &c., in order that proud man, who would not submit himself to God, may be now subject to the creature. To expect help from these externals is superstition; to refuse to join them to the internal is pride.

251

Other religions, as the pagan, are more popular, for they consist in externals. But they are not for educated people. A purely intellectual religion would be more suited to the learned, but it would be of no use to the common people. The Christian religion alone is adapted to all, being composed of externals and internals. It raises the common people to the internal, and humbles the proud to the external; it is not perfect without the two, for the people must understand the spirit of the letter, and the learned must submit their spirit to the letter.

252

For we must not misunderstand ourselves; we are as much automatic as intellectual; and hence it comes that the instrument by which conviction is attained is not demonstrated alone. How few things are demonstrated? Proofs only convince the mind. Custom is the source of our strongest and most believed proofs. It bends the automaton, which persuades the mind without its thinking about the matter. Who has demonstrated that there will be a to-morrow, and that we shall die? And what is more believed? It is, then, custom which persuades us of it; it is custom that makes so many men Christians; custom that makes them Turks, heathens, artisans, soldiers, &c. (Faith in baptism is more received among Christians than among Turks.) Finally, we must have recourse to it when once the mind has seen where the truth is, in order to quench our thirst, and steep ourselves in that belief, which escapes us at every hour; for always to have proofs ready is too much trouble. We must get an easier belief, which is that of custom, which, without violence, without art, without argument, makes us believe things, and inclines all our powers to this belief, so that out soul falls naturally into it. It is not enough to believe only by force of conviction, when the automaton is inclined to believe the contrary. Both our parts must be made to believe, the mind by reasons which it is sufficient to have seen once in a lifetime, and the automaton by custom, and by not allowing it to incline to the contrary. *Inclina cor meum, Deus.*

The reason acts slowly, with so many examinations, and on so many principles, which must be always present, that at every hour it falls asleep, or wanders, through want of having all its principles present. Feeling does not act thus; it acts in a moment, and is always ready to act. We must then put our faith in feeling; otherwise it will be always vacillating.

253

Two extremes: to exclude reason, to admit reason only.

254

It is not a rare thing to have to reprove the world for too much docility. It is a natural vice like credulity, and as pernicious. Superstition.

255

Piety is different from superstition.

To carry piety as far as superstition is to destroy it.

The heretics reproach us for this superstitious submission. This is to do what they reproach us for…

Infidelity, not to believe in the Eucharist, because it is not seen.

Superstition to believe propositions. Faith, &c.

256

I say there are few true Christians, even as regards faith. There are many who believe but from superstition. There are many who do not believe solely from wickedness. Few are between the two.

In this I do not include those who are of truly pious character, nor all those who believe from a feeling in their heart.

257

There are only three kinds of persons; those who serve God, having found Him; others who are occupied in seeking Him, not having found Him; while the remainder live without seeking Him, and without having found Him. The first are reasonable and happy, the last are foolish and unhappy; those between are unhappy and reasonable.

258

Unus quisque sibi Deum fingit.

Disgust.

259

Ordinary people have the power of not thinking of that about which they do not wish to think. "Do not meditate on the passages about the Messiah," said the Jew to his son. Thus our people often act. Thus are false religions preserved, and even the true one, in regard to many persons.

But there are some who have not the power of thus preventing thought, and who think so much the more as they are forbidden. These undo false religions, and even the true one, if they do not find solid arguments.

260

They hide themselves in the press, and call numbers to their rescue. Tumult.

Authority. — So far from making it a rule to believe a thing because you have heard it, you ought to believe nothing without putting yourself into the position as if you had never heard it.

It is your own assent to yourself, and the constant voice of your own reason, and not of others, that should make you believe.

Belief is so important! A hundred contradictions might be true. If antiquity were the rule of belief, men of ancient time would then be without rule. If general consent, if men had perished?

False humanity, pride.

Lift the curtain. You try in vain; if you must either believe, or deny, or doubt. Shall we then have no rule? We judge that animals do well what they do. Is there no rule whereby to judge men?

To deny, to believe, and to doubt well, are to a man what the race is to a horse.

Punishment of those who sin, error.

261

Those who do not love the truth take as a pretext that it is disputed, and that a multitude deny it. And so their error arises only from this, that they do not love either truth or charity. Thus they are without excuse.

262

Superstition and lust. Scruples, evil desires. Evil fear; fear, not such as comes from a belief in God, but such as comes from a doubt whether He exists or not. True fear comes from faith; false fear comes from doubt. True fear is joined to hope, because it is born of faith, and because men hope in the God in whom they believe. False fear is joined to despair, because men fear the God in whom they have no belief. The former fear to lose Him; the latter fear to find Him.

263

“A miracle,” says one, “would strengthen my faith.” He says so when he does not see one. Reasons, seen from afar, appear to limit our view; but when they are reached, we begin to see beyond. Nothing stops the nimbleness of our mind. There is no rule, say we, which has not some exceptions, no truth so general which has not some aspect in which it fails. It is sufficient that it be not absolutely universal to give us a pretext for applying the exceptions to the present subject, and for saying, “This is not always true; there are therefore cases where it is not

so.” It only remains to show that this is one of them; and that is why we are very awkward or unlucky, if we do not find one some day.

264

We do not weary of eating and sleeping every day, for hunger and sleepiness recur. Without that we should weary of them. So, without the hunger for spiritual things, we weary of them. Hunger after righteousness, the eighth beatitude.

265

Faith indeed tells what the senses do not tell, but not the contrary of what they see. It is above them and not contrary to them.

266

How many stars have telescopes revealed to us which did not exist for our philosophers of old! We freely attack Holy Scripture on the great number of stars, saying, “There are only one thousand and twenty-eight, we know it.” There is grass on the earth, we see it — from the moon we would not see it — and on the grass are leaves, and in these leaves are small animals; but after that no more. — O presumptuous man! — the compounds are composed of elements, and the elements not. — O presumptuous man! Here is a fine reflection. — We must not say that there is anything which we do not see. — We must then talk like others, but not think like them.

267

The last proceeding of reason is to recognise that there is an infinity of things which are beyond it. It is but feeble if it does not see so far as to know this. But if natural things are beyond it, what will be said of supernatural?

268

Submission. — We must know where to doubt, where to feel certain, where to submit. He who does not do so, understands not the force of reason. There are some who offend against these three rules, either by affirming everything as demonstrative, from want of knowing what demonstration is; or by doubting everything, from want of knowing where to submit; or by submitting in everything, from want of knowing where they must judge.

269

Submission is the use of reason in which consists true Christianity.

270

St. Augustine. — Reason would never submit, if it did not judge that there are some occasions on which it ought to submit. It is then right for it to submit, when it judges that it ought to submit.

271

Wisdom sends us to childhood. *Nisi efficiamini sicut parvuli.*

272

There is nothing so conformable to reason as this disavowal of reason.

273

If we submit everything to reason, our religion will have no mysterious and supernatural element. If we offend the principles of reason, our religion will be absurd and ridiculous.

274

All our reasoning reduces itself to yielding to feeling.

But fancy is like, though contrary to feeling, so that we cannot distinguish between these contraries. One person says that my feeling is fancy, another that his fancy is feeling. We should have a rule. Reason offers itself; but it is pliable in every sense; and thus there is no rule.

275

Men often take their imagination for their heart; and they believe they are converted as soon as they think of being converted.

276

M. de Roannez said: “Reasons come to me afterwards, but at first a thing pleases or shocks me without my knowing the reason, and yet it shocks me for that reason which I only discover afterwards.” But I believe, not that it shocked him for the reasons which were found afterwards, but that these reasons were only found because it shocks him.

277

The heart has its reasons, which reason does not know. We feel it in a thousand things. I say that the heart naturally loves the Universal Being, and also itself naturally, according as it gives itself to them; and it hardens itself against one or the other at its will. You have rejected the one, and kept the other. Is it by reason that you love yourself?

278

It is the heart which experiences God, and not the reason. This, then, is faith: God felt by the heart, not by the reason.

279

Faith is a gift of God; do not believe that we said it was a gift of reasoning. Other religions do not say this of their faith. They only gave reasoning in order to arrive at it, and yet it does not bring them to it.

280

The knowledge of God is very far from the love of Him.

281

Heart, instinct, principles.

282

We know truth, not only by the reason, but also by the heart, and it is in this last way that we know first principles; and reason, which has no part in it, tries in vain to impugn them. The sceptics, who have only this for their object, labour to no purpose. We know that we do not dream, and however impossible it is for us to prove it by reason, this inability demonstrates only the weakness of our reason, but not, as they affirm, the uncertainty of all our knowledge. For the knowledge of first principles, as space, time, motion, number, is as sure as any of those which we get from reasoning. And reason must trust these intuitions of the heart, and must base them on every argument. (We have intuitive knowledge of the tri-dimensional nature of space, and of the infinity of number, and reason then shows that there are no two square numbers one of which is double of the other. Principles are intuited, propositions are inferred, all with certainty, though in different ways.) And it is as useless and absurd for reason to demand from the heart proofs of her first principles, before admitting them, as it would be for the heart to demand from reason an intuition of all demonstrated propositions before accepting them.

This inability ought, then, to serve only to humble reason, which would judge all, but not to impugn our certainty, as if only reason were capable of instructing

us. Would to God, on the contrary, that we had never need of it, and that we knew everything by instinct and intuition! But nature has refused us this boon. On the contrary, she has given us but very little knowledge of this kind; and all the rest can be acquired only by reasoning.

Therefore, those to whom God has imparted religion by intuition are very fortunate, and justly convinced. But to those who do not have it, we can give it only by reasoning, waiting for God to give them spiritual insight, without which faith is only human, and useless for salvation.

283

Order. — Against the objection that Scripture has no order.

The heart has its own order; the intellect has its own, which is by principle and demonstration. The heart has another. We do not prove that we ought to be loved by enumerating in order the causes of love; that would be ridiculous.

Jesus Christ and Saint Paul employ the rule of love, not of intellect; for they would warm, not instruct. It is the same with Saint Augustine. This order consists chiefly in digressions on each point to indicate the end, and keep it always in sight.

284

Do not wonder to see simple people believe without reasoning. God imparts to them love of Him and hatred of self. He inclines their heart to believe. Men will never believe with a saving and real faith, unless God inclines their heart; and they will believe as soon as He inclines it. And this is what David knew well, when he said: *Inclina cor meum, Deus, in…*

285

Religion is suited to all kinds of minds. Some pay attention only to its establishment, and this religion is such that its very establishment suffices to

prove its truth. Others trace it even to the apostles. The more learned go back to the beginning of the world. The angels see it better still, and from a more distant time.

286

Those who believe without having read the Testaments, do so because they have an inward disposition entirely holy, and all that they hear of our religion conforms to it. They feel that a God has made them; they desire only to love God; they desire to hate themselves only. They feel that they have no strength in themselves; that they are incapable of coming to God; and that if God does not come to them, they can have no communion with Him. And they hear our religion say that men must love God only, and hate self only; but that all being corrupt and unworthy of God, God made Himself man to unite Himself to us. No more is required to persuade men who have this disposition in their heart, and who have this knowledge of their duty and of their inefficiency.

287

Those whom we see to be Christians without the knowledge of the prophets and evidences, nevertheless judge of their religion as well as those who have that knowledge. They judge of it by the heart, as others judge of it by the intellect. God Himself inclines them to believe, and thus they are most effectively convinced.

I confess indeed that one of those Christians who believe without proofs will not perhaps be capable of convincing an infidel who will say the same of himself. But those who know the proofs of religion will prove without difficulty that such a believer is truly inspired by God, though he cannot prove it himself.

For God having said in His prophecies (which are undoubtedly prophecies), that in the reign of Jesus Christ He would spread His spirit abroad among nations,

and that the youths and maidens and children of the Church would prophesy; it is certain that the Spirit of God is in these, and not in the others.

288

Instead of complaining that God had hidden Himself, you will give Him thanks for having revealed so much of Himself; and you will also give Him thanks for not having revealed Himself to haughty sages, unworthy to know so holy a God.

Two kinds of persons know Him: those who have a humble heart, and who love lowliness, whatever kind of intellect they may have, high or low; and those who have sufficient understanding to see the truth, whatever opposition they may have to it.

289

Proof. — 1. The Christian religion, by its establishment, having established itself so strongly, so gently, whilst contrary to nature. — 2. The sanctity, the dignity, and the humility of a Christian soul. — 3. The miracles of Holy Scripture. — 4. Jesus Christ in particular. — 5. The apostles in particular. — 6. Moses and the prophets in particular. — 7. The Jewish people. — 8. The prophecies. — 9. Perpetuity; no religion has perpetuity. — 10. The doctrine which gives a reason for everything. — 11. The sanctity of this law. — 12. By the course of the world.

Surely, after considering what is life and what is religion, we should not refuse to obey the inclination to follow it, if it comes into our heart; and it is certain that there is no ground for laughing at those who follow it.

290

Proofs of religion. — Morality, Doctrine, Miracles, Prophecies, Types.

SECTION V. Justice and the Reason of Effects

291



IN THE LETTER *On Injustice* can come the ridiculousness of the law that the elder gets all. “My friend, you were born on this side of the mountain, it is therefore just that your elder brother gets everything.”

“Why do you kill me?”

292

He lives on the other side of the water.

293

“Why do you kill me? What! do you not live on the other side of the water? If you lived on this side, my friend, I should be an assassin, and it would be unjust to slay you in this manner. But since you live on the other side, I am a hero, and it is just.”

294

…On what shall man found the order of the world which he would govern? Shall it be on the caprice of each individual? What confusion! Shall it be on justice? Man is ignorant of it.

Certainly had he known it, he would not have established this maxim, the most general of all that obtain among men, that each should follow the custom of his own country. The glory of true equity would have brought all nations under subjection, and legislators would not have taken as their model the fancies and

caprice of Persians and Germans instead of this unchanging justice. We should have seen it set up in all the States on earth and in all times; whereas we see neither justice nor injustice which does not change its nature with change in climate. Three degrees of latitude reverse all jurisprudence; a meridian decides the truth. Fundamental laws change after a few years of possession; right has its epochs; the entry of Saturn into the Lion marks to us the origin of such and such a crime. A strange justice that is bounded by a river! Truth on this side of the Pyrenees, error on the other side.

Men admit that justice does not consist in these customs, but that it resides in natural laws, common to every country. They would certainly maintain it obstinately, if reckless chance which has distributed human laws had encountered even one which was universal; but the farce is that the caprice of men has so many vagaries that there is no such law.

Theft, incest, infanticide, patricide, have all had a place among virtuous actions. Can anything be more ridiculous than that a man should have the right to kill me because he lives on the other side of the water, and because his ruler has a quarrel with mine, though I have none with him?

Doubtless there are natural laws; but good reason once corrupted has corrupted all. *Nihil amplius nostrum est; quod nostrum dicimus, artis est. Ex senatus consultis et plebiscitis crimina exercentur. Ut olim vitiis, sic nunc legibus laboramus.*

The result of this confusion is that one affirms the essence of justice to be the authority of the legislator; another, the interest of the sovereign; another, present custom, and this is the most sure. Nothing, according to reason alone, is just in itself; all changes with time. Custom creates the whole of equity, for the simple reason that it is accepted. It is the mystical foundation of its authority; whoever carries it back to first principles destroys it. Nothing is so faulty as those laws which correct faults. He who obeys them because they are just, obeys a justice which is imaginary, and not the essence of law; it is quite self-contained, it is law and nothing more. He who will examine its motive will find it so feeble and so

trifling that if he be not accustomed to contemplate the wonders of human imagination, he will marvel that one century has gained for it so much pomp and reverence. The art of opposition and of revolution is to unsettle established customs, sounding them even to their source, to point out their want of authority and justice. We must, it is said, get back to the natural and fundamental laws of the State, which an unjust custom has abolished. It is a game certain to result in the loss of all; nothing will be just on the balance. Yet people readily lend their ear to such arguments. They shake off the yoke as soon as they recognise it; and the great profit by their ruin, and by that of these curious investigators of accepted customs. But from a contrary mistake men sometimes think they can justly do everything which is not without an example. That is why the wisest of legislators said that it was necessary to deceive men for their own good; and another, a good politician, *Cum veritatem qua liberetur ignoret, expedit quod fallatur.* We must not see the fact of usurpation; law was once introduced without reason, and has become reasonable. We must make it regarded as authoritative, eternal, and conceal its origin, if we do not wish that it should soon come to an end.

295

Mine, thine.— "This dog is mine," said those poor children; "that is my place in the sun." Here is the beginning and the image of the usurpation of all the earth.

296

When the question for consideration is whether we ought to make war, and kill so many men — condemn so many Spaniards to death — only one man is judge, and he is an interested party. There should be a third, who is disinterested.

297

Veri juris. — We have it no more; if we had it, we should take conformity to the customs of a country as the rule of justice. It is here that, not finding justice, we

have found force, &c.

298

Justice, Might. — It is right that what is just should be obeyed; it is necessary that what is strongest should be obeyed. Justice without might is helpless; might without justice is tyrannical. Justice without might is gainsaid, because there are always offenders; might without justice is condemned. We must then combine justice and might, and for this end make what is just strong, or what is strong just.

Justice is subject to dispute; might is easily recognised and is not disputed. So we cannot give might to justice, because might has gainsaid justice, and has declared that it is she herself who is just. And thus being unable to make what is just strong, we have made what is strong just.

299

The only universal rules are the laws of the country in ordinary affairs, and of the majority in others. Whence comes this? From the might which is in them. Hence it comes that kings, who have power of a different kind, do not follow the majority of their ministers.

No doubt equality of goods is just; but, being unable to cause might to obey justice, men have made it just to obey might. Unable to strengthen justice, they have justified might; so that the just and the strong should unite, and there should be peace, which is the sovereign good.

300

“When a strong man armed keepeth his goods, his goods are in peace.”

301

Why do we follow the majority? It is because they have more reason? No, because they have more power.

Why do we follow the ancient laws and opinions? Is it because they are more sound? No, but because they are unique, and remove from us the root of difference.

302

…It is the effect of might, not of custom. For those who are capable of originality are few; the greater number will only follow, and refuse glory to those inventors who seek it by their inventions. And if these are obstinate in their wish to obtain glory, and despise those who do not invent, the latter will call them ridiculous names, and would beat them with a stick. Let no one then boast of his subtlety, or let him keep his complacency to himself.

303

Might is the sovereign of the world, and not opinion. — But opinion makes use of might. — It is might that makes opinion. Gentleness is beautiful in our opinion. Why? Because he who will dance on a rope will be alone, and I will gather a stronger mob of people who will say that it is unbecoming.

304

The cords which bind the respect of men to each other are in general cords of necessity; for there must be different degrees, all men wishing to rule, and not all being able to do so, but some being able.

Let us then imagine we see society in the process of formation. Men will doubtless fight till the stronger party overcomes the weaker, and a dominant party is established. But when this is once determined, the masters, who do not desire the continuation of strife, then decree that the power which is in their hands shall

be transmitted as they please. Some place it in election by the people, others in hereditary succession, &c.

And this is the point where imagination begins to play its part. Till now power makes fact; now power is sustained by imagination in a certain party, in France in the nobility, in Switzerland in the burgesses, &c.

These cords which bind the respect of men to such and such an individual are therefore the cords of imagination.

305

The Swiss are offended by being called gentlemen, and prove themselves true plebeians in order to be thought worthy of great office.

306

As duchies, kingships, and magistracies are real and necessary, because might rules all, they exist everywhere and always. But since only caprice makes such and such a one a ruler, the principle is not constant, but subject to variation, etc.

307

The chancellor is grave, and clothed with ornaments, for his position is unreal. Not so the king, he has power, and has nothing to do with the imagination. Judges, physicians, etc. appeal only to the imagination.

308

The habit of seeing kings accompanied by guards, drums, officers, and all the paraphernalia which mechanically inspire respect and awe, makes their countenance, when sometimes seen alone without these accompaniments, impress respect and awe on their subjects; because we cannot separate in thought their persons from the surroundings with which we see them usually joined. And the

world, which knows not that this effect is the result of habit, believes that it arises by a natural force, whence come these words, “The character of Divinity is stamped on his countenance,” &c.

309

Justice. — As custom determines what is agreeable, so also does it determine justice.

310

King and tyrant. — I, too, will keep my thoughts secret.

I will take care on every journey.

Greatness of establishment, respect for establishment.

The pleasure of the great is the power to make people happy.

The property of riches is to be given liberally.

The property of each thing must be sought. The property of power is to protect.

When force attacks humbug, when a private soldier takes the square cap off a first president, and throws it out of the window.

311

The government founded on opinion and imagination reigns for some time, and this government is pleasant and voluntary; that founded on might lasts for ever. Thus opinion is the queen of the world, but might is its tyrant.

312

Justice is what is established; and thus all our established laws will necessarily be regarded as just without examination, since they are established.

313

Sound opinions of the people. — Civil wars are the greatest of evils. They are inevitable, if we wish to reward desert; for all will say they are deserving. The evil we have to fear from a fool who succeeds by right of birth, is neither so great nor so sure.

314

God has created all for Himself. He has bestowed upon Himself the power of pain and pleasure.

You can apply it to God, or to yourself. If to God, the Gospel is the rule. If to yourself, you will take the place of God. As God is surrounded by persons full of charity, who ask of Him the blessings of charity that are in His power, so… Recognise then and learn that you are only a king of lust, and take the ways of lust.

315

The Reason of effects. — It is wonderful that men would not have me honour a man clothed in brocade, and followed by seven or eight lackeys! Why! He will have me thrashed, if I do not salute him. This custom is a force. It is the same with a horse in fine trappings in comparison with another! Montaigne is a fool not to see what difference there is, to wonder at our finding any, and to ask the reason. "Indeed," says he, "how comes it," &c.…

316

Sound opinions of the people. — To be spruce is not altogether foolish, for it proves that a great number of people work for one. It shows by one's hair, that one has a valet, a perfumer, &c., by one's band, thread, lace,…&c. Now it is not merely superficial nor merely outward show to have many arms at command. The more arms one has, the more powerful one is. To be spruce is to show one's power.

317

Deference means, “Put yourself to inconvenience.” This is apparently silly, but is quite right. For it is to say, “I would indeed put myself to inconvenience if you required it, since indeed I do so when it is of no service to you.” Deference further serves to distinguish the great. Now if deference was displayed by sitting in an arm-chair, we should show deference to everybody, and so no distinction would be made; but, being put to inconvenience, we distinguish very well.

318

He has four lackeys.

319

How rightly do we distinguish men by external appearances rather than by internal qualities! Which of us two shall have precedence? Who will give place to the other? The least clever. But I am as clever as he. We should have to fight over this. He has four lackeys, and I have only one. This can be seen; we have only to count. It falls to me to yield, and I am a fool if I contest the matter. By this means we are at peace, which is the greatest of boons.

320

The most unreasonable things in the world become most reasonable, because of the unruliness of men. What is less reasonable than to choose the eldest son of a queen to rule a State? We do not choose as captain of a ship the passenger who is of the best family.

This law would be absurd and unjust; but because men are so themselves, and always will be so, it becomes reasonable and just. For whom will men choose, as the most virtuous and able? We at once come to blows, as each claims to be the most virtuous and able. Let us then attach this quality to something indisputable.

This is the king's eldest son. That is clear, and there is no dispute. Reason can do no better, for civil war is the greatest of evils.

321

Children are astonished to see their comrades respected.

322

To be of noble birth is a great advantage. In eighteen years it places a man within the select circle, known and respected, as another would have merited in fifty years. It is a gain of thirty years without trouble.

323

What is the Ego?

Suppose a man puts himself at a window to see those who pass by. If I pass by, can I say that he placed himself there to see me? No; for he does not think of me in particular. But does he who loves someone on account of beauty really love that person? No; for the small-pox, which will kill beauty without killing the person, will cause him to love her no more.

And if one loves me for my judgment, memory, he does not love *me*, for I can lose these qualities without losing myself. Where, then, is this Ego, if it be neither in the body nor in the soul? And how love the body or the soul, except for these qualities which do not constitute *me*, since they are perishable? For it is impossible and would be unjust to love the soul of a person in the abstract, and whatever qualities might be therein. We never, then, love a person, but only qualities.

Let us, then, jeer no more at those who are honoured on account of rank and office; for we love a person only on account of borrowed qualities.

324

The people have very sound opinions, for example:

1. In having preferred diversion and hunting to poetry. The half-learned laugh at it, and glory in being above the folly of the world; but the people are right for a reason which these do not fathom.

2. In having distinguished men by external marks, as birth or wealth. The world again exults in showing how unreasonable this is; but it is very reasonable. Savages laugh at an infant king.

3. In being offended at a blow, on in desiring glory so much. But it is very desirable on account of the other essential goods which are joined to it; and a man who has received a blow, without resenting it, is overwhelmed with taunts and indignities.

4. In working for the uncertain; in sailing on the sea; in walking over a plank.

325

Montaigne is wrong. Custom should be followed only because it is custom, and not because it is reasonable or just. But people follow it for this sole reason, that they think it just. Otherwise they would follow it no longer, although it were the custom; for they will only submit to reason or justice. Custom without this would pass for tyranny; but the sovereignty of reason and justice is no more tyrannical than that of desire. They are principles natural to man.

It would therefore be right to obey laws and customs, because they are laws; but we should know that there is neither truth nor justice to introduce into them, that we know nothing of these, and so must follow what is accepted. By this means we would never depart from them. But people cannot accept this doctrine; and, as they believe that truth can be found, and that it exists in law and custom, they believe them, and take their antiquity as a proof of their truth, and not simply of their authority apart from truth. Thus they obey laws, but they are liable to revolt when these are proved to be valueless; and this can be shown of all, looked at from a certain aspect.

326

Injustice. — It is dangerous to tell the people that the laws are unjust; for they obey them only because they think them just. Therefore it is necessary to tell them at the same time that they must obey them because they are laws, just as they must obey superiors, not because they are just, but because they are superiors. In this way all sedition is prevented, if this can be made intelligible, and it be understood what is the proper definition of justice.

327

The world is a good judge of things, for it is in natural ignorance, which is man's true state. The sciences have two extremes which meet. The first is the pure natural ignorance in which all men find themselves at birth. The other extreme is that reached by great intellects, who, having run through all that men can know, find they know nothing, and come back again to that same ignorance from which they set out; but this is a learned ignorance which is conscious of itself. Those between the two, who have departed from natural ignorance and not been able to reach the other, have some smattering of this vain knowledge, and pretend to be wise. These trouble the world, and are bad judges of everything. The people and the wise constitute the world; these despise it, and are despised. They judge badly of everything, and the world judges rightly of them.

328

The reason of effects. — Continual alternation of *pro* and *con*.

We have then shown that man is foolish, by the estimation he makes of things which are not essential; and all these opinions are destroyed. We have next shown that all these opinions are very sound, and that thus, since all these vanities are well founded, the people are not so foolish as is said. And so we have destroyed the opinion which destroyed that of the people.

But we must now destroy this last proposition, and show that it remains always true that the people are foolish, though their opinions are sound; because they do not perceive the truth where it is, and, as they place it where it is not, their opinions are always very false and very unsound.

329

The weakness of man is the reason why so many things are considered fine, as to be good at playing the lute.

It is only an evil because of our weakness.

330

The power of kings is founded on the reason and on the folly of the people, and specially on their folly. The greatest and most important thing in the world has weakness for its foundation, and this foundation is wonderfully sure; for there is nothing more sure than this, that the people will be weak. What is based on sound reason is very ill founded, as the estimate of wisdom.

331

We can only think of Plato and Aristotle in grand academic robes. They were honest men, like others, laughing with their friends, and when they diverted themselves with writing their *Laws* and the *Politics*, they did it as an amusement. That part of their life was the least philosophic and the least serious; the most philosophic was to live simply and quietly. If they wrote on politics, it was as if laying down rules for a lunatic asylum; and if they presented the appearance of speaking of a great matter, it was because they knew that the madmen, to whom they spoke, thought they were kings and emperors. They entered into their principles in order to make their madness as little harmful as possible.

332

Tyranny consists in the desire of universal power beyond its scope.

There are different assemblies of the strong, the fair, the sensible, the pious, in which each man rules at home, not elsewhere. And sometimes they meet, and the strong and the fair foolishly fight as to who shall be master, for their mastery is of different kinds. They do not understand one another, and their fault is the desire to rule everywhere. Nothing can effect this, not even might, which is of no use in the kingdom of the wise, and is only mistress of external actions.

Tyranny — …So these expressions are false and tyrannical: "I am fair, therefore I must be feared. I am strong, therefore I must be loved. I am…"

Tyranny is the wish to have in one way what can only be had in another. We render different duties to different merits; the duty of love to the pleasant; the duty of fear to the strong; the duty of belief to the learned.

We must render these duties; it is unjust to refuse them, and unjust to ask others. And so it is false and tyrannical to say, "He is not strong, therefore I will not esteem him; he is not able, therefore I will not fear him."

333

Have you never seen people who, in order to complain of the little fuss you make about them, parade before you the example of great men who esteem them? In answer I reply to them, "Show me the merit whereby you have charmed these persons, and I also will esteem you."

334

The reason of effects. — Lust and force are the source of all our actions; lust causes voluntary actions, force involuntary ones.

335

The reason of effects. — It is then true to say that all the world is under a delusion; for, although the opinions of the people are sound, they are not so as

conceived by them, since they think the truth to be where it is not. Truth is indeed in their opinions, but not at the point where they imagine it. [Thus] it is true that we must honour noblemen, but not because noble birth is real superiority, &c.

336

The reason of effects. — We must keep our thought secret, and judge everything by it, while talking like the people.

337

The reason of effects. — Degrees. The people honour persons of high birth. The semi-learned despise them, saying that birth is not a personal, but a chance superiority. The learned honour them, not for popular reasons, but for secret reasons. Devout persons, who have more zeal than knowledge, despise them, in spite of that consideration which makes them honoured by the learned, because they judge them by a new light which piety gives them. But perfect Christians honour them by another and higher light. So arise a succession of opinions for and against, according to the light one has.

338

True Christians nevertheless comply with folly, not because they respect folly, but the command of God, who for the punishment of men has made them subject to these follies. *Omnis creatura subjecta est vanitati. Liberabitur.* Thus Saint Thomas explains the passage in Saint James on giving place to the rich, that if they do it not in the sight of God, they depart from the command of religion.

SECTION VI. The Philosophers

339



I CAN WELL CONCEIVE a man without hands, feet, head (for it is only experience which teaches us that the head is more necessary than feet). But I cannot conceive man without thought; he would be a stone or a brute.

340

The arithmetical machine produces effects which approach nearer to thought than all the actions of animals. But it does nothing which would enable us to attribute will to it, as to the animals.

341

The account of the pike and frog of Liancourt. They do it always, and never otherwise, nor any other thing showing mind.

342

If an animal did by mind what it does by instinct, and if it spoke by mind what it speaks by instinct, in hunting, and in warning its mates that the prey is found or lost; it would indeed also speak in regard to those things which affect it closer, as example, “Gnaw me this cord which is wounding me, and which I cannot reach.”

343

The beak of the parrot, which it wipes, although it is clean.

344

Instinct and reason, marks of two natures.

345

Reason commands us far more imperiously than a master; for in disobeying the one we are unfortunate, and in disobeying the other we are fools.

346

Thought constitutes the greatness of man.

347

Man is but a reed, the most feeble thing in nature; but he is a thinking reed. The entire universe need not arm itself to crush him. A vapour, a drop of water suffices to kill him. But, if the universe were to crush him, man would still be more noble than that which killed him, because he knows that he dies and the advantage which the universe has over him; the universe knows nothing of this.

All our dignity consists, then, in thought. By it we must elevate ourselves, and not by space and time which we cannot fill. Let us endeavour, then, to think well; this is the principle of morality.

348

A thinking reed. — It is not from space that I must seek my dignity, but from the government of my thought. I shall have no more if I possess worlds. By space the universe encompasses and swallows me up like an atom; by thought I comprehend the world.

349

Immateriality of the soul. — Philosophers who have mastered their passions. What matter could do that?

350

The Stoics. — They conclude that what has been done once can be done always, and that since the desire of glory imparts some power to those whom it possesses, others can do likewise. There are feverish movements which health cannot imitate.

Epictetus concludes that since there are consistent Christians, every man can easily be so.

351

Those great spiritual efforts, which the soul sometimes assays, are things on which it does not lay hold. It only leaps to them, not as upon a throne, for ever, but merely for an instant.

352

The strength of a man's virtue must not be measured by his efforts, but by his ordinary life.

353

I do not admire the excess of a virtue as of valour, except I see at the same time the excess of the opposite virtue, as in Epaminondas, who had the greatest valour and the greatest kindness. For otherwise it is not to rise, it is to fall. We do not display greatness by going to one extreme, but in touching both at once, and filling all the intervening space. But perhaps this is only a sudden movement of the soul from one to the other extreme, and in fact it is ever at one point only, as

in the case of a firebrand. Be it so, but at least this indicates agility if not expanse of soul.

354

Man's nature is not always to advance; it has its advances and retreats.

Fever has its cold and hot fits; and the cold proves as well as the hot the greatness of the fire of fever.

The discoveries of men from age to age turn out the same. The kindness and the malice of the world in general are the same. *Plerumque gratæ principibus vices.*

355

Continuous eloquence wearies.

Princes and kings sometimes play. They are not always on their thrones. They weary there. Grandeur must be abandoned to be appreciated. Continuity in everything is unpleasant. Cold is agreeable, that we may get warm.

Nature acts by progress, *itus et reditus*. It goes and returns, then advances further, then twice as much backwards, then more forward than ever, &c.

The tide of the sea behaves in the same manner; and so apparently does the sun in its course.

356

The nourishment of the body is little by little. Fullness of nourishment and smallness of substance.

357

When we would pursue virtues to their extremes on either side, vices present themselves, which insinuate themselves insensibly there, in their insensible

journey towards the infinitely little: and vices present themselves in a crowd towards the infinitely great, so that we lose ourselves in them, and no longer see virtues. We find fault with perfection itself.

358

Man is neither angel nor brute, and the unfortunate thing is that he who would act the angel acts the brute.

359

We do not sustain ourselves in virtue by our own strength, but by the balancing of two opposed vices, just as we remain upright amidst two contrary gales. Remove one of the vices, and we fall into the other.

360

What the Stoics propose is so difficult and foolish!

The Stoics lay down that all those who are not at the high degree of wisdom are equally foolish and vicious, as those who are two inches under water.

361

The sovereign good. Dispute about the sovereign good. — Ut sis contentus temetipso et ex te nascentibus bonis. There is a contradiction, for in the end they advise suicide. Oh! What a happy life, from which we are to free ourselves as from the plague!

362

Ex senatus-consultis et plebiscitis…

To ask like passages.

363

Ex senatus-consultis et plebiscitis scelera exercentur. Sen. 588.

Nihil tam absurde dici potest quod non dicatur ab aliquo philosophorum. Divin.

Quibusdam destinatis sententiis consecrati quæ non probant coguntur defendere. Cic.

Ut omnium rerum sic litterarum quoque intemperantia laboramus. Senec.

Id maxime quemque decet, quod est cujusque suum maxime.

Hos natura modos primum dedit.

Paucis opus est litteris ad bonam mentem.

Si quando turpe non sit, tamen non est non turpe quum id ab multitudine laudetur.

Mihi sic usus est, tibi ut opus est facto, fac. Ter.

364

Rarum est enim ut satis se quisque vereatur.

Tot circa unum caput tumultuantes deos.

Nihil turpius quam cognitioni assertionem præcurrere. Cic.

Nec me pudet, ut istos, fateri nescire quid nesciam.

Melius non incipient.

365

Thought. — All the dignity of man consists in thought. Thought is therefore by its nature a wonderful and incomparable thing. It must have strange defects to be contemptible. But it has such, so that nothing is more ridiculous. How great it is in its nature! How vile it is in its defects!

But what is this thought? How foolish it is!

366

The mind of this sovereign judge of the world is not so independent that it is not liable to be disturbed by the first din about it. The noise of a cannon is not necessary to hinder its thoughts; it needs only the creaking of a weathercock or a pulley. Do not wonder if at present it does not reason well; a fly is buzzing in its ears; that is enough to render it incapable of good judgment. If you wish it to be able to reach the truth, chase away that animal which holds its reason in check and disturbs that powerful intellect which rules towns and kingdoms. Here is a comical god! *O ridicolosissimo eroe!*

367

The power of flies; they win battles, hinder our soul from acting, eat our body.

368

When it is said that heat is only the motions of certain molecules, and light the *conatus recedendi* which we feel, it astonishes us. What! Is pleasure only the ballet of our spirits? We have conceived so different an idea of it! And these sensations seem so removed from those others which we say are the same as those with which we compare them! The sensation from the fire, that warmth which affects us in a manner wholly different from touch, the reception of sound and light, all this appears to us mysterious, and yet it is material like the blow of a stone. It is true that the smallness of the spirits which enter into the pores touches other nerves, but there are always some nerves touched.

369

Memory is necessary for all the operations of reason.

370

[Chance gives rise to thoughts, and chance removes them; no art can keep or acquire them.

A thought has escaped me. I wanted to write it down. I write instead, that it has escaped me.]

371

[When I was small, I hugged my book; and because it sometimes happened to me to…in believing I hugged it, I doubted.…]

372

In writing down my thought, it sometimes escapes me; but this makes me remember my weakness, that I constantly forget. This is as instructive to me as my forgotten thought; for I strive only to know my nothingness.

373

Scepticism. — I shall here write my thoughts without order, and not perhaps in unintentional confusion; that is true order, which will always indicate my object by its very disorder. I should do too much honour to my subject, if I treated it with order, since I want to show that it is incapable of it.

374

What astonishes me most is to see that all the world is not astonished at its own weakness. Men act seriously, and each follows his own mode of life, not because it is in fact good to follow since it is the custom, but as if each man knew certainly where reason and justice are. They find themselves continually deceived, and by a comical humility think it is their own fault, and not that of the art which they claim always to possess. But it is well there are so many such people in the world, who are not sceptics for the glory of scepticism, in order to

show that man is quite capable of the most extravagant opinions, since he is capable of believing that he is not in a state of natural and inevitable weakness, but, on the contrary, of natural wisdom. Nothing fortifies scepticism more than that there are some who are not sceptics; if all were so, they would be wrong.

375

[I have passed a great part of my life believing that there was justice, and in this I was not mistaken; for there is justice according as God has willed to reveal it to us. But I did not take it so, and this is where I made a mistake; for I believed that our justice was essentially just, and that I had that whereby to know and judge of it. But I have so often found my right judgment at fault, that at last I have come to distrust myself, and then others. I have seen changes in all nations and men, and thus after many changes of judgment regarding true justice, I have recognised that our nature was but in continual change, and I have not changed since; and if I changed, I would confirm my opinion.

The sceptic Arcesilaus, who became a dogmatist.]

376

This sect derives more strength from its enemies than from its friends; for the weakness of man is far more evident in those who know it not than in those who know it.

377

Discourses on humility are a source of pride in the vain, and of humility in the humble. So those on scepticism cause believers to affirm. Few men speak humbly of humility, chastely of chastity, few doubtingly of scepticism. We are only falsehood, duplicity, contradiction; we both conceal and disguise ourselves from ourselves.

378

Scepticism. — Excess, like defect of intellect, is accused of madness. Nothing is good but mediocrity. The majority has settled that, and finds fault with him who escapes it at whichever end. I will not oppose it. I quite consent to put myself there, and refuse to be at the lower end, not because it is low, but because it is an end; for I would likewise refuse to be placed at the top. To leave the mean is to abandon humanity. The greatness of the human soul consists in knowing how to preserve the mean. So far from greatness consisting in leaving it, it consists in not leaving it.

379

It is not good to have too much liberty. It is not good to have all one wants.

380

All good maxims are in the world. We only need to apply them. For instance, we do not doubt that we ought to risk our lives in defence of the public good; but for religion, no.

It is true there must be inequality among men; but if this be conceded, the door is opened not only to the highest power, but to the highest tyranny.

We must relax our minds a little; but this opens the door to the greatest debauchery. Let us mark the limits. There are no limits in things. Laws would put them there, and the mind cannot suffer it.

381

When we are too young, we do not judge well; so, also, when we are too old. If we do not think enough, or if we think too much on any matter, we get obstinate and infatuated about it. If one considers one's work immediately after having done it, one is entirely prepossessed in its favour; by delaying too long, one can

no longer enter into the spirit of it. So with pictures seen from too far or too near; there is but one exact point which is the true place wherefrom to look at them: the rest are too near, too far, too high, or too low. Perspective determines that point in the art of painting. But who shall determine it in truth and morality?

382

When all is equally agitated, nothing appears to be agitated, as in a ship. When all tend to debauchery, none appears to do so. He who stops draws attention to the excess of others, like a fixed point.

383

The licentious tell men of orderly lives that they stray from nature's path, while they themselves follow it; as people in a ship think those move who are on the shore. On all sides the language is similar. We must have a fixed point in order to judge. The harbour decides for those who are in a ship; but where shall we find a harbour in morality?

384

Contradiction is a bad sign of truth; several things which are certain are contradicted; several things which are false pass without contradiction. Contradiction is not a sign of falsity, nor the want of contradiction a sign of truth.

385

Scepticism. — Each thing here is partly true and partly false. Essential truth is not so; it is altogether pure and altogether true. This mixture dishonours and annihilates it. Nothing is purely true, and thus nothing is true, meaning by that pure truth. You will say it is true that homicide is wrong. Yes; for we know well the wrong and the false. But what will you say is good? Chastity? I say no; for the

world would come to an end. Marriage? No; continence is better. Not to kill? No; for lawlessness would be horrible, and the wicked would kill all the good. To kill? No; for that destroys nature. We possess truth and goodness only in part, and mingled with falsehood and evil.

386

If we dreamt the same thing every night, it would affect us as much as the objects we see every day. And if an artisan were sure to dream every night for twelve hours' duration that he was a king, I believe he would be almost as happy as a king, who should dream every night for twelve hours on end that he was an artisan.

If we were to dream every night that we were pursued by enemies, and harassed by these painful phantoms, or that we passed every day in different occupations, as in making a voyage, we should suffer almost as much as if it were real, and should fear to sleep, as we fear to wake when we dread in fact to enter on such mishaps. And, indeed, it would cause pretty nearly the same discomforts as the reality.

But since dreams are all different, and each single one is diversified, what is seen in them affects us much less than what we see when awake, because of its continuity, which is not, however, so continuous and level as not to change too; but it changes less abruptly, except rarely, as when we travel, and then we say, "It seems to me I am dreaming." For life is a dream a little less inconstant.

387

[It may be that there are true demonstrations; but this is not certain. Thus, this proves nothing else but that it is not certain that all is uncertain, to the glory of scepticism.]

388

Good sense. — They are compelled to say, "You are not acting in good faith; we are not asleep," &c. How I love to see this proud reason humiliated and suppliant! For this is not the language of a man whose right is disputed, and who defends it with the power of armed hands. He is not foolish enough to declare that men are not acting in good faith, but he punishes this bad faith with force.

389

Ecclesiastes shows that man without God is in total ignorance and inevitable misery. For it is wretched to have the wish, but not the power. Now he would be happy and assured of some truth, and yet he can neither know, nor desire not to know. He cannot even doubt.

390

My God! How foolish this talk is! "Would God have made the world to damn it? Would He ask so much from persons so weak?" &c. Scepticism is the cure for this evil, and will take down this vanity.

391

Conversation. — Great words: Religion, I deny it.

Conversation. — Scepticism helps religion.

392

Against Scepticism. — […It is, then, a strange fact that we cannot define these things without obscuring them, while we speak of them with all assurance.] We assume that all conceive of them in the same way; but we assume it quite gratuitously, for we have no proof of it. I see, in truth, that the same words are applied on the same occasions, and that every time two men see a body change its place, they both express their view of this same fact by the same word, both

saying that it has moved; and from this conformity of application we derive a strong conviction of a conformity of ideas. But this is not absolutely or finally convincing, though there is enough to support a bet on the affirmative, since we know that we often draw the same conclusions from different premises.

This is enough, at least, to obscure the matter; not that it completely extinguishes the natural light which assures us of these things. The academicians would have won. But this dulls it, and troubles the dogmatists to the glory of the sceptical crowd, which consists in this doubtful ambiguity, and in a certain doubtful dimness from which our doubts cannot take away all the clearness, nor our own natural lights chase away all the darkness.

393

It is a singular thing to consider that there are people in the world who, having renounced all the laws of God and nature, have made laws for themselves which they strictly obey, as, for instance, the soldiers of Mahomet, robbers, heretics, etc. It is the same with logicians. It seems that their licence must be without any limits or barriers, since they have broken through so many that are so just and sacred.

394

All the principles of sceptics, stoics, atheists, etc., are true. But their conclusions are false, because the opposite principles are also true.

395

Instinct, Reason. — We have an incapacity of proof, insurmountable by all dogmatism. We have an idea of truth, invincible to all scepticism.

396

Two things instruct man about his whole nature; instinct and experience.

397

The greatness of man is great in that he knows himself to be miserable. A tree does not know itself to be miserable. It is then being miserable to know oneself to be miserable; but it is also being great to know that one is miserable.

398

All these same miseries prove man's greatness. They are the miseries of a great lord, of a deposed king.

399

We are not miserable without feeling it. A ruined house is not miserable. Man only is miserable. *Ego vir videns.*

400

The greatness of man. — We have so great an idea of the soul of man that we cannot endure being despised, or not being esteemed by any soul; and all the happiness of men consists in this esteem.

401

Glory. — The brutes do not admire each other. A horse does not admire his companion. Not that there is no rivalry between them in a race, but that is of no consequence; for, when in the stable, the heaviest and most ill-formed does not give up his oats to another, as men would have others do to them. Their virtue is satisfied with itself.

402

The greatness of man even in his lust, to have known how to extract from it a wonderful code, and to have drawn from it a picture of benevolence.

403

Greatness. — The reasons of effects indicate the greatness of man, in having extracted so fair an order from lust.

404

The greatest baseness of man is the pursuit of glory. But it is also the greatest mark of his excellence; for whatever possessions he may have on earth, whatever health and essential comfort, he is not satisfied if he has not the esteem of men. He values human reason so highly that, whatever advantages he may have on earth, he is not content if he is not also ranked highly in the judgment of man. This is the finest position in the world. Nothing can turn him from that desire, which is the most indelible quality of man's heart.

And those who most despise men, and put them on a level with the brutes, yet wish to be admired and believed by men, and contradict themselves by their own feelings; their nature, which is stronger than all, convincing them of the greatness of man more forcibly than reason convinces them of their baseness.

405

Contradiction. — Pride counterbalancing all miseries. Man either hides his miseries, or, if he disclose them, glories in knowing them.

406

Pride counterbalances and takes away all miseries. Here is a strange monster, and a very plain aberration. He is fallen from his place, and is anxiously seeking it. This is what all men do. Let us see who will have found it.

407

When malice has reason on its side, it becomes proud, and parades reason in all its splendour. When austerity or stern choice has not arrived at the true good, and must needs return to follow nature, it becomes proud by reason of this return.

408

Evil is easy, and has infinite forms; good is almost unique. But a certain kind of evil is as difficult to find as what we call good; and often on this account such particular evil gets passed off as good. An extraordinary greatness of soul is needed in order to attain to it as well as to good.

409

The greatness of man. — The greatness of man is so evident, that it is even proved by his wretchedness. For what in animals is nature we call in man wretchedness; by which we recognise that, his nature being now like that of animals, he has fallen from a better nature which once was his.

For who is unhappy at not being a king, except a deposed king? Was Paulus Emilius unhappy at being no longer consul? On the contrary, everybody thought him happy in having been consul, because the office could only be held for a time. But men thought Perseus so unhappy in being no longer king, because the condition of kingship implied his being always king, that they thought it strange that he endured life. Who is unhappy at having only one mouth? And who is not unhappy at having only one eye? Probably no man ever ventured to mourn at not having three eyes. But any one is inconsolable at having none.

410

Perseus, King of Macedon. — Paulus Emilius reproached Perseus for not killing himself.

411

Notwithstanding the sight of all our miseries, which press upon us and take us by the throat, we have an instinct which we cannot repress, and which lifts us up.

412

There is internal war in man between reason and the passions.

If he had only reason without passions…

If he had only passions without reason…

But having both, he cannot be without strife, being unable to be at peace with the one without being at war with the other. Thus he is always divided against, and opposed to himself.

413

This internal war of reason against the passions has made a division of those who would have peace into two sects. The first would renounce their passions, and become gods; the others would renounce reason, and become brute beasts. (Des Barreaux.) But neither can do so, and reason still remains, to condemn the vileness and injustice of the passions, and to trouble the repose of those who abandon themselves to them; and the passions keep always alive in those who would renounce them.

414

Men are so necessarily mad, that not to be mad would amount to another form of madness.

415

The nature of man may be viewed in two ways: the one according to its end, and then he is great and incomparable; the other according to the multitude, just as we

judge of the nature of the horse and the dog, popularly, by seeing its fleetness, *et animum arcendi*; and then man is abject and vile. These are the two ways which make us judge of him differently, and which occasion such disputes among philosophers.

For one denies the assumption of the other. One says, "He is not born for this end, for all his actions are repugnant to it." The other says, "He forsakes his end, when he does these base actions."

416

For Port-Royal. Greatness and wretchedness. — Wretchedness being deduced from greatness, and greatness from wretchedness, some have inferred man's wretchedness all the more because they have taken his greatness as a proof of it, and others have inferred his greatness with all the more force, because they have inferred it from his very wretchedness. All that the one party has been able to say in proof of his greatness has only served as an argument of his wretchedness to the others, because the greater our fall, the more wretched we are, and *vice versa.* The one party is brought back to the other in an endless circle, it being certain that in proportion as men possess light they discover both the greatness and the wretchedness of man. In a word, man knows that he is wretched. He is therefore wretched, because he is so; but he is really great because he knows it.

417

This twofold nature of man is so evident that some have thought that we had two souls. A single subject seemed to them incapable of such sudden variations from unmeasured presumption to a dreadful dejection of heart.

418

It is dangerous to make man see too clearly his equality with the brutes without showing him his greatness. It is also dangerous to make him see his greatness too

clearly, apart from his vileness. It is still more dangerous to leave him in ignorance of both. But it is very advantageous to show him both. Man must not think that he is on a level either with the brutes or with the angels, nor must he be ignorant of both sides of his nature; but he must know both.

419

I will not allow man to depend upon himself, or upon another, to the end that being without a resting-place and without repose…

420

If he exalt himself, I humble him; if he humble himself, I exalt him; and I always contradict him, till he understands that he is an incomprehensible monster.

421

I blame equally those who choose to praise man, those who choose to blame him, and those who choose to amuse themselves; and I can only approve of those who seek with lamentation.

422

It is good to be tired and wearied by the vain search after the true good, that we may stretch out our arms to the Redeemer.

423

Contraries. After having shown the vileness and the greatness of man. — Let man now know his value. Let him love himself, for there is in him a nature capable of good; but let him not for this reason love the vileness which is in him. Let him despise himself, for this capacity is barren; but let him not therefore despise this natural capacity. Let him hate himself, let him love himself; he has within him the

capacity of knowing the truth and of being happy, but he possesses no truth, either constant or satisfactory.

I would then lead man to the desire of finding truth; to be free from passions, and ready to follow it where he may find it, knowing how much his knowledge is obscured by the passions. I would indeed that he should hate in himself the lust which determined his will by itself, so that it may not blind him in making his choice, and may not hinder him when he has chosen.

424

All these contradictions, which seem most to keep me from the knowledge of religion, have led me most quickly to the true one.

SECTION VII. Morality and Doctrine

425



SECOND PART. — That man without faith cannot know the true good, nor justice.

All men seek happiness. This is without exception. Whatever different means they employ, they all tend to this end. The cause of some going to war, and of others avoiding it, is the same desire in both, attended with different views. The will never takes the least step but to this object. This is the motive of every action of every man, even of those who hang themselves.

And yet after such a great number of years, no one without faith has reached the point to which all continually look. All complain, princes and subjects, noblemen and commoners, old and young, strong and weak, learned and ignorant, healthy and sick, of all countries, all times, all ages, and all conditions.

A trial so long, so continuous, and so uniform, should certainly convince us of our inability to reach the good by our own efforts. But example teaches us little. No resemblance is ever so perfect that there is not some slight difference; and hence we expect that our hope will not be deceived on this occasion as before. And thus, while the present never satisfies us, experience dupes us, and from misfortune to misfortune leads us to death, their eternal crown.

What is it then that this desire and this inability proclaim to us, but that there was once in man a true happiness of which there now remain to him only the mark and empty trace, which he in vain tries to fill from all his surroundings, seeking from things absent the help he does not obtain in things present? But these are all inadequate, because the infinite abyss can only be filled by an infinite and immutable object, that is to say, only by God Himself.

He only is our true good, and since we have forsaken Him, it is a strange thing that there is nothing in nature which has not been serviceable in taking His place; the stars, the heavens, earth, the elements, plants, cabbages, leeks, animals, insects, calves, serpents, fever, pestilence, war, famine, vices, adultery, incest. And since man has lost the true good, everything can appear equally good to him, even his own destruction, though so opposed to God, to reason, and to the whole course of nature.

Some seek good in authority, others in scientific research, others in pleasure. Others, who are in fact nearer the truth, have considered it necessary that the universal good, which all men desire, should not consist in any of the particular things which can only be possessed by one man, and which, when shared, afflict their possessor more by the want of the part he has not, than they please him by the possession of what he has. They have learned that the true good should be such as all can possess at once, without diminution and without envy, and which no one can lose against his will. And their reason is that this desire being natural to man, since it is necessarily in all, and that it is impossible not to have it, they infer from it…

426

True nature being lost, everything becomes its own nature; as the true good being lost, everything becomes its own true good.

427

Man does not know in what rank to place himself. He has plainly gone astray, and fallen from his true place without being able to find it again. He seeks it anxiously and unsuccessfully everywhere in impenetrable darkness.

428

If it is a sign of weakness to prove God by nature, do not despise Scripture; if it is a sign of strength to have known these contradictions, esteem Scripture.

429

The vileness of man in submitting himself to the brutes, and in even worshipping them.

430

For Port Royal. The beginning, after having explained the incomprehensibility. — The greatness and the wretchedness of man are so evident that the true religion must necessarily teach us both that there is in man some great source of greatness, and a great source of wretchedness. It must then give us a reason for these astonishing contradictions.

In order to make man happy, it must prove to him that there is a God; that we ought to love Him; that our true happiness is to be in Him, and our sole evil to be separated from Him; it must recognise that we are full of darkness which hinders us from knowing and loving Him; and that thus, as our duties compel us to love God, and our lusts turn us away from Him, we are full of unrighteousness. It must give us an explanation of our opposition to God and to our own good. It must teach us the remedies for these infirmities, and the means of obtaining these remedies. Let us therefore examine all the religions of the world, and see if there be any other than the Christian which is sufficient for this purpose.

Shall it be that of the philosophers, who put forward as the chief good, the good which is in ourselves? Is this the true good? Have they found the remedy for our ills? Is man's pride cured by placing him on an equality with God? Have those who have made us equal to the brutes, or the Mahommedans who have offered us earthly pleasures as the chief good even in eternity, produced the remedy for our lusts? What religion, then, will teach us to cure pride and lust? What religion will in fact teach us our good, our duties, the weakness which turns

us from them, the cause of this weakness, the remedies which can cure it, and the means of obtaining these remedies?

All other religions have not been able to do so. Let us see what the wisdom of God will do.

“Expect neither truth,” she says, “nor consolation from men. I am she who formed you, and who alone can teach you what you are. But you are now no longer in the state in which I formed you. I created man holy, innocent, perfect. I filled him with light and intelligence. I communicated to him my glory and my wonders. The eye of man saw then the majesty of God. He was not then in the darkness which blinds him, nor subject to mortality and the woes which afflict him. But he has not been able to sustain so great glory without falling into pride. He wanted to make himself his own centre, and independent of my help. He withdrew himself from my rule; and, on his making himself equal to me by the desire of finding his happiness in himself, I abandoned him to himself. And setting in revolt the creatures that were subject to him, I made them his enemies; so that man is now become like the brutes, and so estranged from me that there scarce remains to him a dim vision of his Author. So far has all his knowledge been extinguished or disturbed! The senses, independent of reason, and often the masters of reason, have led him into pursuit of pleasure. All creatures either torment or tempt him, and domineer over him, either subduing him by their strength, or fascinating him by their charms, a tyranny more awful and more imperious.

“Such is the state in which men now are. There remains to them some feeble instinct of the happiness of their former state; and they are plunged in the evils of their blindness and their lust, which have become their second nature.

“From this principle which I disclose to you, you can recognise the cause of those contradictions which have astonished all men, and have divided them into parties holding so different views. Observe, now, all the feelings of greatness and glory which the experience of so many woes cannot stifle, and see if the cause of them must not be in another nature.”

For Port-Royal to-morrow (Prosopopœa).— "It is in vain, O men, that you seek within yourselves the remedy for your ills. All your light can only reach the knowledge that not in yourselves will you find truth or good. The philosophers have promised you that, and have been unable to do it. They neither know what is your true good, nor what is your true state. How could they have given remedies for your ills, when they did not even know them? Your chief maladies are pride, which takes you away from God, and lust, which binds you to earth; and they have done nothing else but cherish one or other of these diseases. If they gave you God as an end, it was only to administer to your pride; they made you think that you are by nature like Him, and conformed to Him. And those who saw the absurdity of this claim put you on another precipice, by making you understand that your nature was like that of the brutes, and led you to seek your good in the lusts which are shared by the animals. This is not the way to cure you of your unrighteousness, which these wise men never knew. I alone can make you understand who you are.…"

Adam, Jesus Christ.

If you are united to God, it is by grace, not by nature. If you are humbled, it is by penitence, not by nature.

Thus this double capacity…

You are not in the state of your creation.

As these two states are open, it is impossible for you not to recognise them. Follow your own feelings, observe yourselves, and see if you do not find the lively characteristics of these two natures. Could so many contradictions be found in a simple subject?

— Incomprehensible. — Not all that is incomprehensible ceases to exist. Infinite number. An infinite space equal to a finite.

— Incredible that God should unite Himself to us. — This consideration is drawn only from the sight of our vileness. But if you are quite sincere over it, follow it as far as I have done, and recognise that we are indeed so vile that we are incapable in ourselves of knowing if His mercy cannot make us capable of Him.

For I would know how this animal, who knows himself to be so weak, has the right to measure the mercy of God, and set limits to it, suggested by his own fancy. He has so little knowledge of what God is, that he does not know what he himself is, and, completely disturbed at the sight of his own state, dares to say that God cannot make him capable of communion with Him.

But I would ask him if God demands anything else from him than the knowledge and love of Him, and why, since his nature is capable of love and knowledge, he believes that God cannot make Himself known and loved by him. Doubtless he knows at least that he exists, and that he loves something. Therefore, if he sees anything in the darkness wherein he is, and if he finds some object of his love among the things on earth, why, if God impart to him some ray of His essence, will he not be capable of knowing and of loving Him in the manner in which it shall please Him to communicate Himself to us? There must then be certainly an intolerable presumption in arguments of this sort, although they seem founded on an apparent humility, which is neither sincere nor reasonable, if it does not make us admit that, not knowing of ourselves what we are, we can only learn it from God.

"I do not mean that you should submit your belief to me without reason, and I do not aspire to overcome you by tyranny. In fact, I do not claim to give you a reason for everything. And to reconcile these contradictions, I intend to make you see clearly, by convincing proofs, those divine signs in me, which may convince you of what I am, and may gain authority for me by wonders and proofs which you cannot reject; so that you may then believe without…the things which I teach you, since you will find no other ground for rejecting them, except that you cannot know of yourselves if they are true or not.

"God has willed to redeem men, and to open salvation to those who seek it. But men render themselves so unworthy of it, that it is right that God should refuse to some, because of their obduracy, what He grants to others from a compassion which is not due to them. If He had willed to overcome the obstinacy of the most hardened, He could have done so by revealing Himself so manifestly

to them that they could not have doubted of the truth of His essence; as it will appear at the last day, with such thunders and such a convulsion of nature, that the dead will rise again, and the blindest will see Him.

"It is not in this manner that He has willed to appear in His advent of mercy, because, as so many make themselves unworthy of His mercy, He has willed to leave them in the loss of the good which they do not want. It was not then right that He should appear in a manner manifestly divine, and completely capable of convincing all men; but it was also not right that He should come in so hidden a manner that He could not be known by those who should sincerely seek Him. He has willed to make Himself quite recognisable by those; and thus, willing to appear openly to those who seek Him with all their heart, and to be hidden from those who flee from Him with all their heart, He so regulates the knowledge of Himself that He has given signs of Himself, visible to those who seek Him, and not to those who seek Him not. There is enough light for those who only desire to see, and enough obscurity for those who have a contrary disposition."

431

No other religion has recognised that man is the most excellent creature. Some, which have quite recognised the reality of his excellence, have considered as mean and ungrateful the low opinions which men naturally have of themselves; and others, which have thoroughly recognised how real is this vileness, have treated with proud ridicule those feelings of greatness, which are equally natural to man.

"Lift your eyes to God," say the first; "see Him whom you resemble, and who has created you to worship Him. You can make yourselves like unto Him; wisdom will make you equal to Him, if you will follow it." "Raise your heads, free men," says Epictetus. And others say, "Bend your eyes to the earth, wretched worm that you are, and consider the brutes whose companion you are."

What, then, will man become? Will he be equal to God or the brutes? What a frightful difference! What, then, shall we be? Who does not see from all this that man has gone astray, that he has fallen from his place, that he anxiously seeks it, that he cannot find it again? And who shall then direct him to it? The greatest men have failed.

432

Scepticism is true; for, after all, men before Jesus Christ did not know where they were, nor whether they were great or small. And those who have said the one or the other, knew nothing about it, and guessed without reason and by chance. They also erred always in excluding the one or the other.

Quod ergo ignorantes, quæritis, religio annuntiat vobis.

433

After having understood the whole nature of man. — That a religion may be true, it must have knowledge of our nature. It ought to know its greatness and littleness, and the reason of both. What religion but the Christian has known this?

434

The chief arguments of the sceptics — I pass over the lesser ones — are that we have no certainty of the truth of these principles apart from faith and revelation, except in so far as we naturally perceive them in ourselves. Now this natural intuition is not a convincing proof of their truth; since, having no certainty, apart from faith, whether man was created by a good God, or by a wicked demon, or by chance, it is doubtful whether these principles given to us are true, or false, or uncertain, according to our origin. Again, no person is certain, apart from faith, whether he is awake or sleeps, seeing that during sleep we believe that we are awake as firmly as we do when we *are* awake; we believe that we see space, figure, and motion; we are aware of the passage of time, we measure it; and in

fact we act as if we were awake. So that half of our life being passed in sleep, we have on our own admission no idea of truth, whatever we may imagine. As all our intuitions are then illusions, who knows whether the other half of our life, in which we think we are awake, is not another sleep a little different from the former, from which we awake when we suppose ourselves asleep?

[And who doubts that, if we dreamt in company, and the dreams chanced to agree, which is common enough, and if we were always alone when awake, we should believe that matters were reversed? In short, as we often dream that we dream, heaping dream upon dream, may it not be that this half of our life, wherein we think ourselves awake, is itself only a dream on which the others are grafted, from which we wake at death, during which we have as few principles of truth and good as during natural sleep, these different thoughts which disturb us being perhaps only illusions like the flight of time and the vain fancies of our dreams?]

These are the chief arguments on one side and the other.

I omit minor ones, such as the sceptical talk against the impressions of custom, education, manners, country, and the like. Though these influence the majority of common folk, who dogmatise only on shallow foundations, they are upset by the least breath of the sceptics. We have only to see their books if we are not sufficiently convinced of this, and we shall very quickly become so, perhaps too much.

I notice the only strong point of the dogmatists, namely, that, speaking in good faith and sincerely, we cannot doubt natural principles. Against this the sceptics set up in one word the uncertainty of our origin, which includes that of our nature. The dogmatists have been trying to answer this objection ever since the world began.

So there is open war among men, in which each must take a part, and side either with dogmatism or scepticism. For he who thinks to remain neutral is above all a sceptic. This neutrality is the essence of the sect; he who is not against them is essentially for them. [In this appears their advantage.] They are not for

themselves; they are neutral, indifferent, in suspense as to all things, even themselves being no exception.

What then shall man do in this state? Shall he doubt everything? Shall he doubt whether he is awake, whether he is being pinched, or whether he is being burned? Shall he doubt whether he doubts? Shall he doubt whether he exists? We cannot go so far as that; and I lay it down as a fact that there never has been a real complete sceptic. Nature sustains our feeble reason, and prevents it raving to this extent.

Shall he then say, on the contrary, that he certainly possesses truth — he who, when pressed ever so little, can show no title to it, and is forced to let go his hold?

What a chimera then is man! What a novelty! What a monster, what a chaos, what a contradiction, what a prodigy! Judge of all things, imbecile worm of the earth; depositary of truth, a sink of uncertainty and error; the pride and refuse of the universe!

Who will unravel this tangle? Nature confutes the sceptics, and reason confutes the dogmatists. What then will you become, O men! who try to find out by your natural reason what is your true condition? You cannot avoid one of these sects, nor adhere to one of them.

Know then, proud man, what a paradox you are to yourself. Humble yourself, weak reason; be silent, foolish nature; learn that man infinitely transcends man, and learn from your Master your true condition, of which you are ignorant. Hear God.

For in fact, if man had never been corrupt, he would enjoy in his innocence both truth and happiness with assurance; and if man had always been corrupt, he would have no idea of truth or bliss. But, wretched as we are, and more so than if there were no greatness in our condition, we have an idea of happiness, and cannot reach it. We perceive an image of truth, and possess only a lie. Incapable of absolute ignorance and of certain knowledge, we have thus been manifestly in a degree of perfection from which we have unhappily fallen.

It is, however, an astonishing thing that the mystery furthest removed from our knowledge, namely, that of the transmission of sin, should be a fact without which we can have no knowledge of ourselves. For it is beyond doubt that there is nothing which more shocks our reason than to say that the sin of the first man has rendered guilty those, who, being so removed from this source, seem incapable of participation in it. This transmission does not only seem to us impossible, it seems also very unjust. For what is more contrary to the rules of our miserable justice than to damn eternally an infant incapable of will, for a sin wherein he seems to have so little a share, that it was committed six thousand years before he was in existence? Certainly nothing offends us more rudely than this doctrine; and yet, without this mystery, the most incomprehensible of all, we are incomprehensible to ourselves. The knot of our condition takes its twists and turns in this abyss, so that man is more inconceivable without this mystery than this mystery is inconceivable to man.

[Whence it seems that God, willing to render the difficulty of our existence unintelligible to ourselves, has concealed the knot so high, or, better speaking, so low, that we are quite incapable of reaching it; so that it is not by the proud exertions of our reason, but by the simple submissions of reason, that we can truly know ourselves.

These foundations, solidly established on the inviolable authority of religion, make us know that there are two truths of faith equally certain: the one, that man, in the state of creation, or in that of grace, is raised above all nature, made like unto God and sharing in His divinity; the other, that in the state of corruption and sin, he is fallen from this state and made like unto the beasts.

These two propositions are equally sound and certain. Scripture manifestly declares this to us, when it says in some places: *Deliciæ meæ esse cum filiis hominum. Effundam spiritum meum super omnem carnem. Dii estis*, &c.; and in other places, *Omnis caro fœnum. Homo assimilatus est jumentis insipientibus, et similis factus est illis. Dixi in corde meo de filiis hominum.* Eccles. iii.

Whence it clearly seems that man by grace is made like unto God, and a partaker in His divinity, and that without grace he is like unto the brute beasts.]

435

Without this divine knowledge what could men do but either become elated by the inner feeling of their past greatness which still remains to them, or become despondent at the sight of their present weakness? For, not seeing the whole truth, they could not attain to perfect virtue. Some considering nature as incorrupt, others as incurable, they could not escape either pride or sloth, the two sources of all vice; since they cannot but either abandon themselves to it through cowardice, or escape it by pride. For if they knew the excellence of man, they were ignorant of his corruption; so that they easily avoided sloth, but fell into pride. And if they recognised the infirmity of nature, they were ignorant of its dignity; so that they could easily avoid vanity, but it was to fall into despair. Thence arise the different schools of the Stoics and Epicureans, the Dogmatists, Academicians, &c.

The Christian religion alone has been able to cure these two vices, not by expelling the one through means of the other according to the wisdom of the world, but by expelling both according to the simplicity of the Gospel. For it teaches the righteous that it raises them even to a participation in divinity itself; that in this lofty state they still carry the source of all corruption, which renders them during all their life subject to error, misery, death, and sin; and it proclaims to the most ungodly that they are capable of the grace of their Redeemer. So making those tremble whom it justifies, and consoling those whom it condemns, religion so justly tempers fear with hope through that double capacity of grace and of sin, common to all, that it humbles infinitely more than reason alone can do, but without despair; and it exalts infinitely more than natural pride, but without inflating; thus making it evident that alone being exempt from error and vice, it alone fulfils the duty of instructing and correcting men.

Who then can refuse to believe and adore this heavenly light? For is it not clearer than day that we perceive within ourselves ineffaceable marks of excellence? And is it not equally true that we experience every hour the results of our deplorable condition? What does this chaos and monstrous confusion proclaim to us but the truth of these two states, with a voice so powerful that it is impossible to resist it?

436

Weakness. — Every pursuit of men is to get wealth; and they cannot have a title to show that they possess it justly, for they have only that of human caprice; nor have they strength to hold it securely. It is the same with knowledge, for disease takes it away. We are incapable both of truth and goodness.

437

We desire truth, and find within ourselves only uncertainty.

We seek happiness, and find only misery and death.

We cannot but desire truth and happiness, and are incapable of certainty or happiness. This desire is left to us, partly to punish us, partly to make us perceive wherefrom we are fallen.

438

If man is not made for God, why is he only happy in God? If man is made for God, why is he so opposed to God?

439

Nature corrupted. — Man does not act by reason, which constitutes his being.

440

The corruption of reason is shown by the existence of so many different and extravagant customs. It was necessary that truth should come, in order that man should no longer dwell within himself.

441

For myself, I confess that so soon as the Christian religion reveals the principle that human nature is corrupt and fallen from God, that opens my eyes to see everywhere the mark of this truth: for nature is such that she testifies everywhere, both within man and without him, to a lost God and a corrupt nature.

442

Man's true nature, his true good, true virtue, and true religion, are things of which the knowledge is inseparable.

443

Greatness, wretchedness. — The more light we have, the more greatness and the more baseness we discover in man. Ordinary men — those who are more educated: philosophers, they astonish ordinary men — Christians, they astonish philosophers.

Who will then be surprised to see that religion only makes us know profoundly what we already know in proportion to our light?

444

This religion taught to her children what men have only been able to discover by their greatest knowledge.

445

Original sin is foolishness to men, but it is admitted to be such. You must not then reproach me for the want of reason in this doctrine, since I admit it to be without reason. But this foolishness is wiser than all the wisdom of men, *sapientius est hominibus*. For without this, what can we say that man is? His whole state depends on this imperceptible point. And how should it be perceived by his reason, since it is a thing against reason, and since reason, far from finding it out by her own ways, is averse to it when it is presented to her?

446

Of original sin. Ample tradition of original sin according to the Jews.

On the saying in Genesis viii, 21: "The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth."

R. Moses Haddarschan: This evil leaven is placed in man from the time that he is formed.

Massechet Succa: This evil leaven has seven names in Scripture. It is called *evil, the foreskin, uncleanness, an enemy, a scandal, a heart of stone, the north wind*; all this signifies the malignity which is concealed and impressed in the heart of man.

Midrasch Tillim says the same thing, and that God will deliver the good nature of man from the evil.

This malignity is renewed every day against man, as it is written, Psalm xxxvii, 32: "The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him"; but God will not abandon him. This malignity tries the heart of man in this life, and will accuse him in the other. All this is found in the *Talmud*.

Midrasch Tillim on Psalm iv, 4: "Stand in awe and sin not." Stand in awe and be afraid of your lust, and it will not lead you into sin. And on Psalm xxxvi, 1: "The wicked has said within his own heart, Let not the fear of God be before me." That is to say that the malignity natural to man has said that to the wicked.

Midrasch el Kohelet: “Better is a poor and wise child than an old and foolish king who cannot foresee the future.” The child is virtue, and the king is the malignity of man. It is called king because all the members obey it, and old because it is in the human heart from infancy to old age, and foolish because it leads man in the way of [*perdition*], which he does not foresee. The same thing is in *Midrasch Tillim*.

Bereschist Rabba on Psalm xxxv, 10: “Lord, all my bones shall bless Thee, which deliverest the poor from the tyrant.” And is there a greater tyrant than the evil leaven? And on Proverbs xxv, 21: “If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat.” That is to say, if the evil leaven hunger, give him the bread of wisdom of which it is spoken in Proverbs ix., and if he be thirsty, give him the water of which it is spoken in Isaiah lv.

Midrasch Tillim says the same thing, and that Scripture in that passage, speaking of the enemy, means the evil leaven; and that, in giving him that bread and that water, we heap coals of fire on his head.

Midrasch el Kohelet on Ecclesiastes ix, 14: “A great king besieged a little city.” This great king is the evil leaven; the great bulwarks built against it are temptations; and there has been found a poor wise man who has delivered it — that is to say, virtue.

And on Psalm xli, 1: “Blessed is he that considereth the poor.”

And on Psalm lxxviii, 39: “The spirit passeth away, and cometh not again”; whence some have erroneously argued against the immortality of the soul. But the sense is that this spirit is the evil leaven, which accompanies man till death, and will not return at the resurrection.

And on Psalm ciii the same thing.

And on Psalm xvi.

Principles of Rabbinism: two Messiahs.

Will it be said that, as men have declared that righteousness has departed the earth, they therefore knew of original sin? — *Nemo ante obitum beatus est* — that is to say, they knew death to be the beginning of eternal and essential happiness?

448

[*Miton*] sees well that nature is corrupt, and that men are averse to virtue; but he does not know why they cannot fly higher.

449

Order. — After corruption to say: "It is right that all those who are in that state should know it, both those who are content with it, and those who are not content with it; but it is not right that all should see Redemption."

450

If we do not know ourselves to be full of pride, ambition, lust, weakness, misery, and injustice, we are indeed blind. And if, knowing this, we do not desire deliverance, what can we say of a man…?

What, then, can we have but esteem for a religion which knows so well the defects of man, and desire for the truth of a religion which promises remedies so desirable?

451

All men naturally hate one another. They employ lust as far as possible in the service of the public weal. But this is only a pretence and a false image of love; for at bottom it is only hate.

452

To pity the unfortunate is not contrary to lust. On the contrary, we can quite well give such evidence of friendship, and acquire the reputation of kindly feeling, without giving anything.

453

From lust men have found and extracted excellent rules of policy, morality, and justice; but in reality this vile root of man, this *figmentum malum*, is only covered, it is not taken away.

454

Injustice. — They have not found any other means of satisfying lust without doing injury to others.

455

Self is hateful. You, Miton, conceal it; you do not for that reason destroy it; you are, then, always hateful.

— No; for in acting as we do to oblige everybody, we give no more occasion for hatred of us. — That is true, if we only hated in self the vexation which comes to us from it. But if I hate it because it is unjust, and because it makes itself the centre of everything, I shall always hate it.

In a word, the Self has two qualities: it is unjust in itself since it makes itself the centre of everything; it is inconvenient to others since it would enslave them; for each self is the enemy, and would like to be the tyrant of all others. You take away its inconvenience, but not its injustice, and so you do not render it lovable to those who hate injustice; you render it lovable only to the unjust, who do not any longer find in it an enemy. And thus you remain unjust, and can please only the unjust.

456

It is a perverted judgment that makes every one place himself above the rest of the world, and prefer his own good, and the continuance of his own good fortune and life, to that of the rest of the world!

457

Each one is all in all to himself; for he being dead, all is dead to him. Hence it comes that each believes himself to be all in all to everybody. We must not judge of nature by ourselves, but by it.

458

"All that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, or the lust of the eyes, or the pride of life; *libido sentiendi, libido sciendi, libido dominandi.*" Wretched is the cursed land which these three rivers of fire enflame rather than water! Happy they who, on these rivers, are not overwhelmed nor carried away, but are immovably fixed, not standing but seated on a low and secure base, whence they do not rise before the light, but, having rested in peace, stretch out their hands to Him, who must lift them up, and make them stand upright and firm in the porches of the holy Jerusalem! There pride can no longer assail them nor cast them down; and yet they weep, not to see all those perishable things swept away by the torrents, but at the remembrance of their loved country, the heavenly Jerusalem, which they remember without ceasing during their prolonged exile.

459

The rivers of Babylon rush and fall and sweep away.

O holy Sion, where all is firm and nothing falls!

We must sit upon the waters, not under them or in them, but on them; and not standing but seated; being seated to be humble, and being above them to be secure. But we shall stand in the porches of Jerusalem.

Let us see if this pleasure is stable or transitory; if it pass away, it is a river of Babylon.

460

The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, pride, &c. — There are three orders of things: the flesh, the spirit, and the will. The carnal are the rich and kings; they have the body as their object. Inquirers and scientists; they have the mind as their object. The wise; they have righteousness as their object.

God must reign over all, and all men must be brought back to Him. In things of the flesh lust reigns specially; in intellectual matters, inquiry specially; in wisdom, pride specially. Not that a man cannot boast of wealth or knowledge, but it is not the place for pride; for in granting to a man that he is learned, it is easy to convince him that he is wrong to be proud. The proper place for pride is in wisdom, for it cannot be granted to a man that he has made himself wise, and that he is wrong to be proud; for that is right. Now God alone gives wisdom, and that is why *Qui gloriatur, in Domino glorietur*.

461

The three lusts have made three sects; and the philosophers have done no other thing than follow one of the three lusts.

462

Search for the true good. — Ordinary men place the good in fortune and external goods, or at least in amusement. Philosophers have shown the vanity of all this, and have placed it where they could.

463

[*Against the philosophers who believe in God without Jesus Christ.*]

Philosophers. — They believe that God alone is worthy to be loved and admired; and they have desired to be loved and admired of men, and do not know their own corruption. If they feel full of feelings of love and admiration, and find therein their chief delight, very well, let them think themselves good. But if they find themselves averse to Him, if they have no inclination but the desire to establish themselves in the esteem of men, and if their whole perfection consists only in making men — but without constraint — find their happiness in loving them, I declare that this perfection is horrible. What! they have known God, and have not desired solely that men should love Him, but that men should stop short at them! They have wanted to be the object of the voluntary delight of men.

464

Philosophers. — We are full of things which take us out of ourselves.

Our instinct makes us feel that we must seek our happiness outside ourselves. Our passions impel us outside, even when no objects present themselves to excite them. External objects tempt us of themselves, and call to us, even when we are not thinking of them. And thus philosophers have said in vain, "Retire within yourselves, you will find your good there." We do not believe them, and those who believe them are the most empty and the most foolish.

465

The Stoics say, "Retire within yourselves; it is there you will find your rest." And that is not true.

Others say, "Go out of yourselves; seek happiness in amusement." And this is not true. Illness comes.

Happiness is neither without us nor within us. It is in God, both without us and within us.

466

Had Epictetus seen the way perfectly, he would have said to men, "You follow a wrong road"; he shows that there is another, but he does not lead to it. It is the way of willing what God wills. Jesus Christ alone leads to it: *Via, veritas*.

The vices of Zeno himself.

467

The reason of effects. — Epictetus. Those who say, "You have a headache;" this is not the same thing. We are assured of health, and not of justice; and in fact his own was nonsense.

And yet he believed it demonstrable, when he said, "It is either in our power or it is not." But he did not perceive that it is not in our power to regulate the heart, and he was wrong to infer this from the fact that there were some Christians.

468

No other religion has proposed to men to hate themselves. No other religion then can please those who hate themselves, and who seek a Being truly lovable. And these, if they had never heard of the religion of a God humiliated, would embrace it at once.

469

I feel that I might not have been; for the Ego consists in my thoughts. Therefore I, who think, would not have been, if my mother had been killed before I had life. I am not then a necessary being. In the same way I am not eternal or infinite; but I see plainly that there exists in nature a necessary Being, eternal and infinite.

470

"Had I seen a miracle," say men, "I should become converted." How can they be sure they would do a thing of the nature of which they are ignorant? They imagine

that this conversion consists in a worship of God which is like commerce, and in a communion such as they picture to themselves. True religion consists in annihilating self before that Universal Being, whom we have so often provoked, and who can justly destroy us at any time; in recognising that we can do nothing without Him, and have deserved nothing from Him but His displeasure. It consists in knowing that there is an unconquerable opposition between us and God, and that without a mediator there can be no communion with Him.

471

It is unjust that men should attach themselves to me, even though they do it with pleasure and voluntarily. I should deceive those in whom I had created this desire; for I am not the end of any, and I have not the wherewithal to satisfy them. Am I not about to die? And thus the object of their attachment will die. Therefore, as I would be blamable in causing a falsehood to be believed, though I should employ gentle persuasion, though it should be believed with pleasure, and though it should give me pleasure; even so I am blamable in making myself loved, and if I attract persons to attach themselves to me. I ought to warn those who are ready to consent to a lie, that they ought not to believe it, whatever advantage comes to me from it; and likewise that they ought not to attach themselves to me; for they ought to spend their life and their care in pleasing God, or in seeking Him.

472

Self-will will never be satisfied, though it should have command of all it would; but we are satisfied from the moment we renounce it. Without it we cannot be discontented; with it we cannot be content.

473

Let us imagine a body full of thinking members.

474

Members, To commence with that. — To regulate the love which we owe to ourselves, we must imagine a body full of thinking members, for we are members of the whole, and must see how each member should love itself, &c.…

475

If the feet and the hands had a will of their own, they could only be in their order in submitting this particular will to the primary will which governs the whole body. Apart from that, they are in disorder and mischief; but in willing only the good of the body, they accomplish their own good.

476

We must love God only and hate self only.

If the foot had always been ignorant that it belonged to the body, and that there was a body on which it depended, if it had only had the knowledge and the love of self, and if it came to know that it belonged to a body on which it depended, what regret, what shame for its past life, for having been useless to the body which inspired its life, which would have annihilated it if it had rejected it and separated it from itself, as it kept itself apart from the body! What prayers for its preservation in it! And with what submission would it allow itself to be governed by the will which rules the body, even to consenting, if necessary, to be cut off, or it would lose its character as member! For every member must be quite willing to perish for the body, for which alone the whole is.

477

It is false that we are worthy of the love of others; it is unfair that we should desire it. If we were born reasonable and impartial, knowing ourselves and others, we should not give this bias to our will. However, we are born with it; therefore

born unjust, for all tends to self. This is contrary to all order. We must consider the general good; and the propensity to self is the beginning of all disorder, in war, in politics, in economy, and in the particular body of man. The will is therefore depraved.

If the members of natural and civil communities tend towards the weal of the body, the communities themselves ought to look to another more general body of which they are members. We ought therefore to look to the whole. We are therefore born unjust and depraved.

478

When we want to think of God, is there nothing which turns us away, and tempts us to think of something else? All this is bad, and is born in us.

479

If there is a God, we must love Him only, and not the creatures of a day. The reasoning of the ungodly in the *Book of Wisdom* is only based upon the non-existence of God. "On that supposition," say they, "let us take delight in the creatures." That is the worst that can happen. But if there were a God to love, they would not have come to this conclusion, but to quite the contrary. And this is the conclusion of the wise: "There is a God, let us therefore not take delight in the creatures."

Therefore all that incites us to attach ourselves to the creatures is bad; since it prevents us from serving God if we know Him, or from seeking Him if we know Him not. Now we are full of lust. Therefore we are full of evil; therefore we ought to hate ourselves and all that excited us to attach ourselves to any other object than God only.

480

To make the members happy, they must have one will, and submit it to the body.

481

The examples of the noble deaths of the Lacedæmonians and others scarce touch us. For what good is it to us? But the example of the death of the martyrs touches us; for they are "our members." We have a common tie with them. Their resolution can form ours, not only by example, but because it has perhaps deserved ours. There is nothing of this in the examples of the heathen. We have no tie with them; as we do not become rich by seeing a stranger who is so, but in fact by seeing a father or a husband who is so.

482

Morality. — God having made the heavens and the earth, which do not feel the happiness of their being, He has willed to make beings who should know it, and who should compose a body of thinking members. For our members do not feel the happiness of their union, of their wonderful intelligence, of the care which has been taken to infuse into them minds, and to make them grow and endure. How happy they would be if they saw and felt it! But for this they would need to have intelligence to know it, and good-will to consent to that of the universal soul. But if, having received intelligence, they employed it to retain nourishment for themselves without allowing it to pass to the other members, they would hate rather than love themselves; their blessedness, as well as their duty, consisting in their consent to the guidance of the whole soul to which they belong, which loves them better than they love themselves.

483

To be a member is to have neither life, being, nor movement, except through the spirit of the body, and for the body.

The separate member, seeing no longer the body to which it belongs, has only a perishing and dying existence. Yet it believes it is a whole, and seeing not the

body on which it depends, it believes it depends only on self, and desires to make itself both centre and body. But not having in itself a principle of life, it only goes astray, and is astonished in the uncertainty of its being; perceiving in fact that it is not a body, and still not seeing that it is a member of a body. In short, when it comes to know itself, it has returned as it were to its own home, and loves itself only for the body. It deplores its past wanderings.

It cannot by its nature love any other thing, except for itself and to subject it to self, because each thing loves itself more than all. But in loving the body, it loves itself, because it only exists in it, by it, and for it. *Qui adhæret Deo unus spiritus est.*

The body loves the hand; and the hand, if it had a will, should love itself in the same way as it is loved by the soul. All love which goes beyond this is unfair.

Adhærens Deo unus spiritus est. We love ourselves, because we are members of Jesus Christ. We love Jesus Christ, because He is the body of which we are members. All is one, one is in the other, like the Three Persons.

484

Two laws suffice to rule the whole Christian Republic better than all the laws of statecraft.

485

The true and only virtue, then, is to hate self (for we are hateful on account of lust), and to seek a truly lovable being to love. But as we cannot love what is outside ourselves, we must love a being who is in us, and is not ourselves; and that is true of each and all men. Now, only the Universal Being is such. The kingdom of God is within us; the universal good is within us, is ourselves — and not ourselves.

486

The dignity of man in his innocence consisted in using and having dominion over the creatures, but now in separating himself from them, and subjecting himself to them.

487

Every religion is false, which as to its faith does not worship one God as the origin of everything, and which as to its morality does not love one only God as the object of everything.

488

…But it is impossible that God should ever be the end, if He is not the beginning. We lift our eyes on high, but lean upon the sand; and the earth will dissolve, and we shall fall whilst looking at the heavens.

489

If there is one sole source of everything, there is one sole end of everything; everything through Him, everything for Him. The true religion, then, must teach us to worship Him only, and to love Him only. But as we find ourselves unable to worship what we know not, and to love any other object but ourselves, the religion which instructs us in these duties must instruct us also of this inability, and teach us also the remedies for it. It teaches us that by one man all was lost, and the bond broken between God and us, and that by one man the bond is renewed.

We are born so averse to this love of God, and it is so necessary that we must be born guilty, or God would be unjust.

490

Men, not being accustomed to form merit, but only to recompense it where they find it formed, judge of God by themselves.

491

The true religion must have as a characteristic the obligation to love God. This is very just, and yet no other religion has commanded this; ours has done so. It must also be aware of human lust and weakness; ours is so. It must have adduced remedies for this; one is prayer. No other religion has asked of God to love and follow Him.

492

He who hates not in himself his self-love, and that instinct which leads him to make himself God, is indeed blinded. Who does not see that there is nothing so opposed to justice and truth? For it is false that we deserve this, and it is unfair and impossible to attain it, since all demand the same thing. It is, then, a manifest injustice which is innate in us, of which we cannot get rid, and of which we must get rid.

Yet no religion has indicated that this was a sin; or that we were born in it; or that we were obliged to resist it; or has thought of giving us remedies for it.

493

The true religion teaches our duties; our weaknesses, pride, and lust; and the remedies, humility and mortification.

494

The true religion must teach greatness and misery; must lead to the esteem and contempt of self, to love and to hate.

495

If it is an extraordinary blindness to live without investigating what we are, it is a terrible one to live an evil life, while believing in God.

496

Experience makes us see an enormous difference between piety and goodness.

497

Against those who, trusting to the mercy of God, live heedlessly, without doing good works. — As the two sources of our sins are pride and sloth, God has revealed to us two of His attributes to cure them, mercy and justice. The property of justice is to humble pride, however holy may be our works, *et non intres in judicium*, &c.; and the property of mercy is to combat sloth by exhorting to good works, according to that passage: "The goodness of God leadeth to repentance," and that other of the Ninevites: "Let us do penance to see if peradventure He will pity us." And thus mercy is so far from authorising slackness, that it is on the contrary the quality which formally attacks it; so that instead of saying, "If there were no mercy in God we should have to make every kind of effort after virtue," we must say, on the contrary, that it is because there is mercy in God, that we must make every kind of effort.

498

It is true there is difficulty in entering into godliness. But this difficulty does not arise from the religion which begins in us, but from the irreligion which is still there. If our senses were not opposed to penitence, and if our corruption were not opposed to the purity of God, there would be nothing in this painful to us. We suffer only in proportion as the vice which is natural to us resists supernatural grace. Our heart feels torn asunder between these opposed efforts. But it would be very unfair to impute this violence to God, who is drawing us on, instead of to the world, which is holding us back. It is as a child, which a mother tears from the

arms of robbers, in the pain it suffers, should love the loving and legitimate violence of her who procures its liberty, and detest only the impetuous and tyrannical violence of those who detain it unjustly. The most cruel war which God can make with men in this life is to leave them without that war which He came to bring. “I came to send war,” He says, “and to teach them of this war. I came to bring fire and the sword.” Before Him the world lived in this false peace.

499

External works. — There is nothing so perilous as what pleases God and man. For those states, which please God and man, have one property which pleases God, and another which pleases men; as the greatness of Saint Teresa. What pleased God was her deep humility in the midst of her revelations; what pleased men was her light. And so we torment ourselves to imitate her discourses, thinking to imitate her conditions, and not so much to love what God loves, and to put ourselves in the state which God loves.

It is better not to fast, and thereby humbled, than to fast and be self-satisfied therewith. The Pharisee and the Publican.

What use will memory be to me, if it can alike hurt and help me, and all depends upon the blessing of God, who gives only to things done for Him, according to His rules and in His ways, the manner being as important as the thing, and perhaps more; since God can bring forth good out of evil, and without God we bring forth evil out of good?

500

The meaning of the words, good and evil.

501

First step: to be blamed for doing evil, and praised for doing good.

Second step: to be neither praised, nor blamed.

502

Abraham took nothing for himself, but only for his servants. So the righteous man takes for himself nothing of the world, nor the applause of the world, but only for his passions, which he uses as their master, saying to the one, "Go," and to another, "Come." *Sub te erit appetitus tuus.* The passions thus subdued are virtues. Even God attributes to Himself avarice, jealousy, anger; and these are virtues as well as kindness, pity, constancy, which are also passions. We must employ them as slaves, and, leaving to them their food, prevent the soul from taking any of it. For, when the passions become masters, they are vices; and they give their nutriment to the soul, and the soul nourishes itself upon it, and is poisoned.

503

Philosophers have consecrated the vices by placing them in God Himself. Christians have consecrated the virtues.

504

The just man acts by faith in the least things; when he reproves his servants, he desires their conversion by the Spirit of God, and prays God to correct them; and he expects as much from God as from his own reproofs, and prays God to bless his corrections. And so in all his other actions he proceeds with the Spirit of God; and his actions deceive us by reason of the…or suspension of the Spirit of God in him; and he repents in his affliction.

505

All things can be deadly to us, even the things made to serve us; as in nature walls can kill us, and stairs can kill us, if we do not walk circumspectly.

The least movement affects all nature; the entire sea changes because of a rock. Thus in grace, the least action affects everything by its consequences; therefore everything is important.

In each action we must look beyond the action at our past, present, and future state, and at others whom it affects, and see the relations of all those things. And then we shall be very cautious.

506

Let God not impute to us our sins, that is to say, all the consequences and results of our sins, which are dreadful, even those of the smallest faults, if we wish to follow them out mercilessly!

507

The spirit of grace; the hardness of the heart; external circumstances.

508

Grace is indeed needed to turn a man into a saint; and he who doubts it does not know what a saint or a man is.

509

Philosophers. — A fine thing to cry to a man who does not know himself, that he should come of himself to God! And a fine thing to say so to a man who does know himself!

510

Man is not worthy of God, but he is not incapable of being made worthy.

It is unworthy of God to unite Himself to wretched man; but it is not unworthy of God to pull him out of his misery.

511

If we would say that man is too insignificant to deserve communion with God, we must indeed be very great to judge of it.

512

It is, in peculiar phraseology, wholly the body of Jesus Christ, but it cannot be said to be the whole body of Jesus Christ. The union of two things without change does not enable us to say that one becomes the other; the soul thus being united to the body, the fire to the timber, without change. But change is necessary to make the form of the one become the form of the other; thus the union of the Word to man. Because my body without my soul would not make the body of a man; therefore my soul united to any matter whatsoever will make my body. It does not distinguish the necessary condition from the sufficient condition; the union is necessary, but not sufficient. The left arm is not the right.

Impenetrability is a property of matter.

Identity of number in regard to the same time requires the identity of matter.

Thus if God united my soul to a body in China, the same body, *idem numero*, would be in China.

The same river which runs there is *idem numero* as that which runs at the same time in China.

513

Why God has established prayer.

1. To communicate to His creatures the dignity of causality.
2. To teach us from whom our virtue comes.
3. To make us deserve other virtues by work.

But to keep His own pre-eminence, He grants prayer to whom He pleases.

Objection: But we believe that we hold prayer of ourselves.

This is absurd; for since, though having faith, we cannot have virtues, how should we have faith? Is there a greater distance between infidelity and faith than between faith and virtue?

Merit. This word is ambiguous.

Meruit habere Redemptorem.

Meruit tam sacra membra tangere.

Digno tam sacra membra tangere.

Non sum dignus.

Qui manducat indignus.

Dignus est accipere.

Dignare me.

God is only bound according to His promises. He has promised to grant justice to prayers; He has never promised prayer only to the children of promise.

Saint Augustine has distinctly said that strength would be taken away from the righteous. But it is by chance that he said it; for it might have happened that the occasion of saying it did not present itself. But his principles make us see that when the occasion for it presented itself, it was impossible that he should not say it, or that he should say anything to the contrary. It is then rather that he was forced to say it, when the occasion presented itself, than that he said it, when the occasion presented itself, the one being of necessity, the other of chance. But the two are all that we can ask.

514

"Work out your own salvation with fear."

Proofs of prayer. *Petenti dabitur.*

Therefore it is in our power to ask. On the other hand, there is God. So it is not in our power, since the obtaining of (the grace) to pray to Him in not in our

power. For since salvation is not in us, and the obtaining of such grace is from Him, prayer is not in our power.

The righteous man should then hope no more in God, for he ought not to hope, but to strive to obtain what he wants.

Let us conclude then that, since man is now unrighteous since the first sin, and God is unwilling that he should thereby not be estranged from Him, it is only by a first effect that he is not estranged.

Therefore, those who depart from God have not this first effect without which they are not estranged from God, and those who do not depart from God have this first effect. Therefore, those whom we have seen possessed for some time of grace by this first effect, cease to pray, for want of this first effect.

Then God abandons the first in this sense.

515

The elect will be ignorant of their virtues, and the outcast of the greatness of their sins: “Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered, thirsty?” &c.

516

Romans iii, 27. Boasting is excluded. By what law? Of works? nay, but by faith. Then faith is not within our power like the deeds of the law, and it is given to us in another way.

517

Comfort yourselves. It is not from yourselves that you should expect grace; but, on the contrary, it is in expecting nothing from yourselves, that you must hope for it.

518

Every condition, and even the martyrs, have to fear, according to Scripture.

The greatest pain of purgatory is the uncertainty of the judgment. *Deus absconditus.*

519

John viii. *Multi crediderunt in eum. Dicebat ergo Jesus: "Si manseritis…vere mei discipuli eritis, et veritas* liberabit vos." Responderunt: "Semen Abrahæ sumus, et nemini servimus unquam."

There is a great difference between disciples and true disciples. We recognise them by telling them that the truth will make them free; for if they answer that they are free, and that it is in their power to come out of slavery to the devil, they are indeed disciples, but not true disciples.

520

The law has not destroyed nature, but has instructed it; grace has not destroyed the law, but has made it act. Faith received at baptism is the source of the whole life of Christians and of the converted.

521

Grace will always be in the world, and nature also; so that the former is in some sort natural. And thus there will always be Pelagians, and always Catholics, and always strife; because the first birth makes the one, and the grace of the second birth the other.

522

The law imposed what it did not give. Grace gives what is imposes.

523

All faith consists in Jesus Christ and in Adam, and all morality in lust and in grace.

524

There is no doctrine more appropriate to man than this, which teaches him his double capacity of receiving and of losing grace, because of the double peril to which he is exposed, of despair or of pride.

525

The philosophers did not prescribe feelings suitable to the two states.

They inspired feelings of pure greatness, and that is not man's state.

They inspired feelings of pure littleness, and that is not man's state.

There must be feelings of humility, not from nature, but from penitence, not to rest in them, but to go on to greatness. There must be feelings of greatness, not from merit, but from grace, and after having passed through humiliation.

526

Misery induces despair, pride induces presumption. The Incarnation shows man the greatness of his misery by the greatness of the remedy which he required.

527

The knowledge of God without that of man's misery causes pride. The knowledge of man's misery without that of God causes despair. The knowledge of Jesus Christ constitutes the middle course, because in Him we find both God and our misery.

528

Jesus Christ is a God whom we approach without pride, and before whom we humble ourselves without despair.

529

…Not a degradation which renders us incapable of good, nor a holiness exempt from evil.

530

A person told me one day that on coming from confession he felt great joy and confidence. Another told me that he remained in fear. Whereupon I thought that these two together would make one good man, and that each was wanting in that he had not the feeling of the other. The same often happens in other things.

531

He who knows the will of his master will be beaten with more blows, because of the power he has by his knowledge. *Qui justus est, justificetur adhuc*, because of the power he has by justice. From him who has received most, will the greatest reckoning be demanded, because of the power he has by this help.

532

Scripture has provided passages of consolation and of warning for all conditions.

Nature seems to have done the same thing by her two infinities, natural and moral; for we shall always have the higher and the lower, the more clever and the less clever, the most exalted and the meanest, in order to humble our pride, and exalt our humility.

533

Comminutum cor (Saint Paul). This is the Christian character. *Alba has named you, I know you no more* (Corneille). That is the inhuman character. The human character is the opposite.

534

There are only two kinds of men: the righteous who believe themselves sinners; the rest, sinners, who believe themselves righteous.

535

We owe a great debt to those who point out faults. For they mortify us. They teach us that we have been despised. They do not prevent our being so in the future; for we have many other faults for which we may be despised. They prepare for us the exercise of correction and freedom from fault.

536

Man is so made that by continually telling him he is a fool he believes it, and by continually telling it to himself he makes himself believe it. For man holds an inward talk with his self alone, which it behoves him to regulate well: *Corrumpunt mores bonos colloquia prava*. We must keep silent as much as possible and talk with ourselves only of God, whom we know to be true; and thus we convince ourselves of the truth.

537

Christianity is strange. It bids man recognise that he is vile, even abominable, and bids him desire to be like God. Without such a counterpoise, this dignity would make him horribly vain, or this humiliation would make him terribly abject.

538

With how little pride does a Christian believe himself united to God! With how little humiliation does he place himself on a level with the worms of earth!

A glorious manner to welcome life and death, good and evil!

539

What difference in point of obedience is there between a soldier and a Carthusian monk? For both are equally under obedience and dependent, both engaged in equally painful exercises. But the soldier always hopes to command, and never attains this, for even captains and princes are ever slaves and dependants; still he ever hopes and ever works to attain this. Whereas the Carthusian monk makes a vow to be always dependent. So they do not differ in their perpetual thraldom, in which both of them always exist, but in the hope, which one always has, and the other never.

540

The hope which Christians have of possessing an infinite good is mingled with real enjoyment as well as with fear; for it is not as with those who should hope for a kingdom, of which they, being subjects, would have nothing; but they hope for holiness, for freedom from injustice, and they have something of this.

541

None is so happy as a true Christian, nor so reasonable, virtuous, or amiable.

542

The Christian religion alone makes man altogether *lovable and happy*. In honesty, we cannot perhaps be altogether lovable and happy.

543

Preface. — The metaphysical proofs of God are so remote from the reasoning of men, and so complicated, that they make little impression; and if they should be of service to some, it would be only during the moment that they see such demonstration; but an hour afterwards they fear they have been mistaken.

Quod curiositate cognoverunt superbia amiserunt.

This is the result of the knowledge of God obtained without Jesus Christ; it is communion without a mediator with the God whom they have known without a mediator. Whereas those who have known God by a mediator know their own wretchedness.

544

The God of the Christians is a God who makes the soul feel that He is her only good, that her only rest is in Him, that her only delight is in loving Him; and who makes her at the same time abhor the obstacles which keep her back, and prevent her from loving God with all her strength. Self-love and lust, which hinder us, are unbearable to her. Thus God makes her feel that she has this root of self-love which destroys her, and which He alone can cure.

545

Jesus Christ did nothing but teach men that they loved themselves, that they were slaves, blind, sick, wretched, and sinners; that He must deliver them, enlighten, bless, and heal them; that this would be effected by hating self, and by following Him through suffering and the death on the cross.

546

Without Jesus Christ man must be in vice and misery; with Jesus Christ man is free from vice and misery; in Him is all our virtue and all our happiness. Apart from Him there is but vice, misery, darkness, death, despair.

547

We know God only by Jesus Christ. Without this mediator all communion with God is taken away; through Jesus Christ we know God. All those who have claimed to know God, and to prove Him without Jesus Christ, have had only weak proofs. But in proof of Jesus Christ we have the prophecies, which are solid and palpable proofs. And these prophecies, being accomplished and proved true by the event, mark the certainty of these truths, and therefore the divinity of Christ. In Him then, and through Him, we know God. Apart from Him, and without the Scripture, without original sin, without a necessary Mediator promised and come, we cannot absolutely prove God, nor teach right doctrine and right morality. But through Jesus Christ, and in Jesus Christ, we prove God, and teach morality and doctrine. Jesus Christ is then the true God of men.

But we know at the same time our wretchedness; for this God is none other than the Saviour of our wretchedness. So we can only know God well by knowing our iniquities. Therefore those who have known God, without knowing their wretchedness, have not glorified Him, but have glorified themselves. *Quia…non cognovit per sapientiam…placuit Deo per stultitiam prædicationis salvos facere.*

548

Not only do we know God by Jesus Christ alone, but we know ourselves only by Jesus Christ. We know life and death only through Jesus Christ. Apart from Jesus Christ, we do not know what is our life, nor our death, nor God, nor ourselves.

Thus without the Scripture, which has Jesus Christ alone for its object, we know nothing, and see only darkness and confusion in the nature of God, and in our own nature.

549

It is not only impossible but useless to know God without Jesus Christ. They have not departed from Him, but approached; they have not humbled themselves, but…

Quo quisque optimus est, pessimus, si hoc ipsum, quod optimus est, adscribat sibi.

550

I love poverty because He loved it. I love riches because they afford me the means of helping the very poor. I keep faith with everybody; I do not render evil to those who wrong me, but I wish them a lot like mine, in which I receive neither evil nor good from men. I try to be just, true, sincere, and faithful to all men; I have a tender heart for those to whom God has more closely united me; and whether I am alone, or seen of men, I do all my actions in the sight of God, who must judge of them, and to whom I have consecrated them all.

These are my sentiments; and every day of my life I bless my Redeemer, who has implanted them in me, and who, of a man full of weakness, of miseries, of lust, of pride, and of ambition, has made a man free from all these evils by the power of His grace, to which all the glory of it is due, as of myself I have only misery and error.

551

Dignior plagis quam osculis non timeo quia amo.

552

The Sepulchre of Jesus Christ. — Jesus Christ was dead, but seen on the Cross. He was dead, and hidden in the Sepulchre.

Jesus Christ was buried by the saints alone.

Jesus Christ wrought no miracle at the Sepulchre.

Only the saints entered it.

It is there, not on the Cross, that Jesus Christ takes a new life.

It is the last mystery of the Passion and the Redemption.

Jesus Christ had nowhere to rest on earth but in the Sepulchre.

His enemies only ceased to persecute Him at the Sepulchre.

553

The Mystery of Jesus. — Jesus suffers in His passions the torments which men inflict upon Him; but in His agony He suffers the torments which He inflicts on Himself; *turbare semetipsum*. This is a suffering from no human, but an almighty hand, for He must be almighty to bear it.

Jesus seeks some comfort at least in His three dearest friends, and they are asleep. He prays them to bear with Him for a little, and they leave Him with entire indifference, having so little compassion that it could not prevent their sleeping even for a moment. And thus Jesus was left alone to the wrath of God.

Jesus is alone on the earth, without any one not only to feel and share His suffering, but even to know of it; He and Heaven were alone in that knowledge.

Jesus is in a garden, not of delight as the first Adam, where he lost himself and the whole human race, but in one of agony, where He saved Himself and the whole human race.

He suffers this affliction and this desertion in the horror of night.

I believe that Jesus never complained but on this single occasion; but then He complained as if he could no longer bear His extreme suffering. “My soul is sorrowful, even unto death.”

Jesus seeks companionship and comfort from men. This is the sole occasion in all His life, as it seems to me. But He receives it not, for His disciples are asleep.

Jesus will be in agony even to the end of the world. We must not sleep during that time.

Jesus, in the midst of this universal desertion, including that of His own friends chosen to watch with Him, finding them asleep, is vexed because of the danger to

which they expose, not Him, but themselves; He cautions them for their own safety and their own good, with a sincere tenderness for them during their ingratitude, and warns them that the spirit is willing and the flesh weak.

Jesus, finding them still asleep, without being restrained by any consideration for themselves or for Him, has the kindness not to waken them, and leaves them in repose.

Jesus prays, uncertain of the will of His Father, and fears death; but, when He knows it, He goes forward to offer Himself to death. *Eamus. Processit* (John).

Jesus asked of men and was not heard.

Jesus, while His disciples slept, wrought their salvation. He has wrought that of each of the righteous while they slept, both in their nothingness before their birth, and in their sins after their birth.

He prays only once that the cup pass away, and then with submission; and twice that it come if necessary.

Jesus is weary.

Jesus, seeing all His friends asleep and all His enemies wakeful, commits Himself entirely to His Father.

Jesus does not regard in Judas his enmity, but the order of God, which He loves and admits, since He calls him friend.

Jesus tears Himself away from His disciples to enter into His agony; we must tear ourselves away from our nearest and dearest to imitate Him.

Jesus being in agony and in the greatest affliction, let us pray longer.

We implore the mercy of God, not that He may leave us at peace in our vices, but that He may deliver us from them.

If God gave us masters by His own hand, oh! how necessary for us to obey them with a good heart! Necessity and events follow infallibly.— "Console thyself, thou wouldst not seek Me, if thou hadst not found Me.

"I thought of thee in Mine agony, I have sweated such drops of blood for thee.

"It is tempting Me rather than proving thyself, to think if thou wouldst do such and such a thing on an occasion which has not happened; I shall act in thee if it

occur.

“Let thyself be guided by My rules; see how well I have led the Virgin and the saints who have let Me act in them.

“The Father loves all that I do.

“Dost thou wish that it always cost Me the blood of My humanity, without thy shedding tears?

“Thy conversion is My affair; fear not, and pray with confidence as for Me.

“I am present with thee by My Word in Scripture, by My Spirit in the Church and by inspiration, by My power in the priests, by My prayer in the faithful.

“Physicians will not heal thee, for thou wilt die at last. But it is I who heal thee, and make the body immortal.

“Suffer bodily chains and servitude, I deliver thee at present only from spiritual servitude.

“I am more a friend to thee than such and such an one, for I have done for thee more than they, they would not have suffered what I have suffered from thee, and they would not have died for thee as I have done in the time of thine infidelities and cruelties, and as I am ready to do, and do, among my elect and at the Holy Sacrament.”

“If thou knewest thy sins, thou wouldst lose heart.”

— I shall lose it then, Lord, for on Thy assurance I believe their malice.

— “No, for I, by whom thou learnest, can heal thee of them, and what I say to thee is a sign that I will heal thee. In proportion to thy expiation of them, thou wilt know them, and it will be said to thee: ‘Behold, thy sins are forgiven thee.’ Repent, then, for thy hidden sins, and for the secret malice of those which thou knowest.”

— Lord, I give Thee all.

— “I love thee more ardently than thou hast loved thine abominations, *ut immundus pro luto*.

“To Me be the glory, not to thee, worm of the earth.

“Ask thy confessor, when My own words are to thee occasion of evil, vanity, or curiosity.”

— I see in me depths of pride, curiosity, and lust. There is no relation between me and God, nor Jesus Christ the Righteous. But He has been made sin for me; all Thy scourges are fallen upon Him. He is more abominable than I, and, far from abhorring me, He holds Himself honoured that I go to Him and succour Him.

But He has healed Himself, and still more so will He heal me.

I must add my wounds to His, and join myself to Him; and He will save me in saving Himself. But this must not be postponed to the future.

Eritis sicut dii scientes bonum et malum. Each one creates his god, when judging, “This is good or bad”; and men mourn or rejoice too much at events.

Do little things as though they were great, because of the majesty of Jesus Christ who does them in us, and who lives our life; and do the greatest things as though they were little and easy, because of His omnipotence.

554

It seems to me that Jesus Christ only allowed His wounds to be touched after His resurrection: *Noli me tangere.* We must unite ourselves only to His sufferings.

At the Last Supper He gave Himself in communion as about to die; to the disciples at Emmaus as risen from the dead; to the whole Church as ascended into heaven.

555

“Compare not thyself with others, but with Me. If thou dost not find Me in those with whom thou comparest thyself, thou comparest thyself to one who is abominable. If thou findest Me in them, compare thyself to Me. But whom wilt thou compare? Thyself, or Me in thee? If it is thyself, it is one who is abominable. If it is I, thou comparest Me to Myself. Now I am God in all.

“I speak to thee, and often counsel thee, because thy director cannot speak to thee, for I do not want thee to lack a guide.

“And perhaps I do so at his prayers, and thus he leads thee without thy seeing it. Thou wouldst not seek Me, if thou didst not possess Me.

“Be not therefore troubled.”

SECTION VIII. The Fundamentals of the Christian Religion

556



MEN BLASPHEME WHAT they do not know. The Christian religion consists in two points. It is of equal concern to men to know them, and it is equally dangerous to be ignorant to them. And it is equally of God's mercy that He has given indications of both.

And yet they take occasion to conclude that one of these points does not exist, from that which should have caused them to infer the other. The sages who have said there is only one God have been persecuted, the Jews were hated, and still more the Christians. They have seen by the light of nature that if there be a true religion on earth, the course of all things must tend to it as to a centre.

The whole course of things must have for its object the establishment and the greatness of religion. Men must have within them feelings suited to what religion teaches us. And, finally, religion must so be the object and centre to which all things tend, that whoever knows the principles of religion can give an explanation both of the whole nature of man in particular, and of the whole course of the world in general.

And on this ground they take occasion to revile the Christian religion, because they misunderstand it. They imagine that it consists simply in the worship of a God considered as great, powerful, and eternal; which is strictly deism, almost as far removed from the Christian religion as atheism, which is its exact opposite. And thence they conclude that this religion is not true, because they do not see that all things concur to the establishment of this point, that God does not manifest Himself to men with all the evidence which He could show.

But let them conclude what they will against deism, they will conclude nothing against the Christian religion, which properly consists in the mystery of the Redeemer, who, uniting in Himself the two natures, human and divine, has redeemed men from the corruption of sin in order to reconcile them in His divine person to God.

The Christian religion then teaches men these two truths; that there is a God whom men can know, and that there is a corruption in their nature which renders them unworthy of Him. It is equally important to men to know both these points; and it is equally dangerous for man to know God without knowing his own wretchedness, and to know his own wretchedness without knowing the Redeemer who can free him from it. The knowledge of only one of these points gives rise either to the pride of philosophers, who have known God, and not their own wretchedness, or to the despair of atheists, who know their own wretchedness, but not the Redeemer.

And, as it is alike necessary to man to know these two points, so is it alike merciful of God to have made us know them. The Christian religion does this; it is in this that it consists.

Let us herein examine the order of the world, and see if all things do not tend to establish these two chief points of this religion: Jesus Christ is the end of all, and the centre to which all tends. Whoever knows Him knows the reason of everything.

Those who fall into error err only through failure to see one of these two things. We can then have an excellent knowledge of God without that of our own wretchedness, and of our own wretchedness without that of God. But we cannot know Jesus Christ without knowing at the same time both God and our own wretchedness.

Therefore I shall not undertake here to prove by natural reasons either the existence of God, or the Trinity, or the immortality of the soul, or anything of that nature; not only because I should not feel myself sufficiently able to find in nature arguments to convince hardened atheists, but also because such knowledge

without Jesus Christ is useless and barren. Though a man should be convinced that numerical proportions are immaterial truths, eternal and dependent on a first truth, in which they subsist, and which is called God, I should not think him far advanced towards his own salvation.

The God of Christians is not a God who is simply the author of mathematical truths, or of the order of the elements; that is the view of heathens and Epicureans. He is not merely a God who exercises His providence over the life and fortunes of men, to bestow on those who worship Him a long and happy life. That was the portion of the Jews. But the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, the God of Christians, is a God of love and of comfort, a God who fills the soul and heart of those whom He possesses, a God who makes them conscious of their inward wretchedness, and His infinite mercy, who unites Himself to their inmost soul, who fills it with humility and joy, with confidence and love, who renders them incapable of any other end than Himself.

All who seek God without Jesus Christ, and who rest in nature, either find no light to satisfy them, or come to form for themselves a means of knowing God and serving Him without a mediator. Thereby they fall either into atheism, or into deism, two things which the Christian religion abhors almost equally.

Without Jesus Christ the world would not exist; for it should needs be either that it would be destroyed or be a hell.

If the world existed to instruct man of God, His divinity would shine through every part in it in an indisputable manner; but as it exists only by Jesus Christ, and for Jesus Christ, and to teach men both their corruption and their redemption, all displays the proofs of these two truths.

All appearance indicates neither a total exclusion nor a manifest presence of divinity, but the presence of a God who hides Himself. Everything bears this character.

…Shall he alone who knows his nature know it only to be miserable? Shall he alone who knows it be alone unhappy?

…He must not see nothing at all, nor must he see sufficient for him to believe he possesses it; but he must see enough to know that he has lost it. For to know of his loss, he must see and not see; and that is exactly the state in which he naturally is.

…Whatever part he takes, I shall not leave him at rest…

557

…It is then true that everything teaches man his condition, but he must understand this well. For it is not true that all reveals God, and it is not true that all conceals God. But it is at the same time true that He hides Himself from those who tempt Him, and that He reveals Himself to those who seek Him, because men are both unworthy and capable of God; unworthy by their corruption, capable by their original nature.

558

What shall we conclude from all our darkness, but our unworthiness?

559

If there never had been any appearance of God, this eternal deprivation would have been equivocal, and might have as well corresponded with the absence of all divinity, as with the unworthiness of men to know Him; but His occasional, though not continual, appearances remove the ambiguity, If He appeared once, He exists always; and thus we cannot but conclude both that there is a God, and that men are unworthy of Him.

560

We do not understand the glorious state of Adam, nor the nature of his sin, nor the transmission of it to us. These are matters which took place under conditions of a

nature altogether different from our own, and which transcend our present understanding.

The knowledge of all this is useless to us as a means of escape from it; and all that we are concerned to know, is that we are miserable, corrupt, separated from God, but ransomed by Jesus Christ, whereof we have wonderful proofs on earth.

So the two proofs of corruption and redemption are drawn from the ungodly, who live in indifference to religion, and from the Jews who are irreconcilable enemies.

561

There are two ways of proving the truths of our religion; one by the power of reason, the other by the authority of him who speaks.

We do not make use of the latter, but of the former. We do not say, “This must be believed, for Scripture, which says it, is divine.” But we say that it must be believed for such and such a reason, which are feeble arguments, as reason may be bent to everything.

562

There is nothing on earth that does not show either the wretchedness of man, or the mercy of God; either the weakness of man without God, or the strength of man with God.

563

It will be one of the confusions of the damned to see that they are condemned by their own reason, by which they claimed to condemn the Christian religion.

564

The prophecies, the very miracles and proofs of our religion, are not of such a nature that they can be said to be absolutely convincing. But they are also of such a kind that it cannot be said that it is unreasonable to believe them. Thus there is both evidence and obscurity to enlighten some and confuse others. But the evidence is such that it surpasses, or at least equals, the evidence to the contrary; so that it is not reason which can determine men not to follow it, and thus it can only be lust or malice of heart. And by this means there is sufficient evidence to condemn, and insufficient to convince; so that it appears in those who follow it, that it is grace, and not reason, which makes them follow it; and in those who shun it, that it is lust, not reason, which makes them shun it.

Vere discipuli, vere Israëlita, vere liberi, vere cibus.

565

Recognise, then, the truth of religion in the very obscurity of religion, in the little light we have of it, and in the indifference which we have to knowing it.

566

We understand nothing of the works of God, if we do not take as a principle that He has willed to blind some, and enlighten others.

567

The two contrary reasons. We must begin with that; without that we understand nothing, and all is heretical; and we must even add at the end of each truth that the opposite truth is to be remembered.

568

Objection. The Scripture is plainly full of matters not dictated by the Holy Spirit. — *Answer.* Then they do not harm faith. — *Objection.* But the Church has

decided that all is of the Holy Spirit. — *Answer.* I answer two things: first, the Church has not so decided; secondly, if she should so decide, it could be maintained.

Do you think that the prophecies cited in the Gospel are related to make you believe? No, it is to keep you from believing.

569

Canonical. — The heretical books in the beginning of the Church serve to prove the canonical.

570

To the chapter on the *Fundamentals* must be added that on *Typology* touching the reason of types: why Jesus Christ was prophesied as to His first coming; why prophesied obscurely as to the manner.

571

The reason why. Types. — [They had to deal with a carnal people and to render them the depositary of the spiritual covenant.] To give faith to the Messiah, it was necessary there should have been precedent prophecies, and that these should be conveyed by persons above suspicion, diligent, faithful, unusually zealous, and known to all the world.

To accomplish all this, God chose this carnal people, to whom He entrusted the prophecies which foretell the Messiah as a deliverer, and as a dispenser of those carnal goods which this people loved. And thus they have had an extraordinary passion for their prophets, and, in sight of the whole world, have had charge of these books which foretell their Messiah, assuring all nations that He should come, and in the way foretold in the books, which they held open to the whole world. Yet this people, deceived by the poor and ignominious advent of the Messiah, have been His most cruel enemies. So that they, the people least open to

suspicion in the world of favouring us, the most strict and most zealous that can be named for their law and their prophets, have kept the books incorrupt. Hence those who have rejected and crucified Jesus Christ, who has been to them an offence, are those who have charge of the books which testify of Him, and state that He will be an offence and rejected. Therefore they have shown it was He by rejecting Him, and He has been alike proved both by the righteous Jews who received Him, and by the unrighteous who rejected Him, both facts having been foretold.

Wherefore the prophecies have a hidden and spiritual meaning, to which this people were hostile, under the carnal meaning which they loved. If the spiritual meaning had been revealed, they would not have loved it, and, unable to bear it, they would not have been zealous of the preservation of their books and their ceremonies; and if they had loved these spiritual promises, and had preserved them incorrupt till the time of the Messiah, their testimony would have had no force, because they had been his friends.

Therefore it was well that the spiritual meaning should be concealed; but, on the other hand, if this meaning had been so hidden as not to appear at all, it could not have served as a proof of the Messiah. What then was done? In a crowd of passages it has been hidden under the temporal meaning, and in a few has been clearly revealed; besides that the time and the state of the world have been so clearly foretold that it is clearer than the sun. And in some places this spiritual meaning is so clearly expressed, that it would require a blindness like that which the flesh imposes on the spirit when it is subdued by it, not to recognise it.

See, then, what has been the prudence of God. This meaning is concealed under another in an infinite number of passages, and in some, though rarely, it is revealed; but yet so that the passages in which it is concealed are equivocal, and can suit both meanings; whereas the passages where it is disclosed are unequivocal, and can only suit the spiritual meaning.

So that this cannot lead us into error, and could only be misunderstood by so carnal a people.

For when blessings are promised in abundance, what was to prevent them from understanding the true blessings, but their covetousness, which limited the meaning to worldly goods? But those whose only good was in God referred them to God alone. For there are two principles, which divide the wills of men, covetousness and charity. Not that covetousness cannot exist along with faith in God, nor charity with worldly riches; but covetousness uses God, and enjoys the world, and charity is the opposite.

Now the ultimate end gives names to things. All which prevents us from attaining it, is called an enemy to us. Thus the creatures, however good, are the enemies of the righteous, when they turn them away from God, and God Himself is the enemy of those whose covetousness He confounds.

Thus as the significance of the word "enemy" is dependent on the ultimate end, the righteous understood by it their passions, and the carnal the Babylonians; and so these terms were obscure only for the unrighteous. And this is what Isaiah says: *Signa legem in electis meis,* and that Jesus Christ shall be a stone of stumbling. But, "Blessed are they who shall not be offended in him." Hosea, *ult.*, says excellently, "Where is the wise? and he shall understand what I say. The righteous shall know them, for the ways of God are right; but the transgressors shall fall therein."

572

Hypothesis that the apostles were impostors. — The time clearly, the manner obscurely. — Five typical proofs.

2000 $\left\{\begin{matrix}\\ \\ \\ \end{matrix}\right.$ 1600 prophets. 400 scattered.

573

Blindness of Scripture.— "The Scripture," said the Jews, "says that we shall not know whence Christ will come (John vii. 27, and xii. 34). The Scripture says that Christ abideth for ever, and He said that He should die." Therefore, says Saint John, they believed not, though He had done so many miracles, that the word of Isaiah might be fulfilled: *"He hath blinded them,"* &c.

574

Greatness. — Religion is so great a thing that it is right that those who will not take the trouble to seek it, if it be obscure, should be deprived of it. Why, then, do any complain, if it be such as can be found by seeking?

575

All things work together for good to the elect, even the obscurities of Scripture; for they honour them because of what is divinely clear. And all things work together for evil to the rest of the world, even what is clear; for they revile such, because of the obscurities which they do not understand.

576

The general conduct of the world towards the Church: God willing to blind and to enlighten. — The event having proved the divinity of these prophecies, the rest ought to be believed. And thereby we see the order of the world to be of this kind. The miracles of the Creation and the Deluge being forgotten, God sends the law and the miracles of Moses, the prophets who prophesied particular things; and to prepare a lasting miracle, He prepares prophecies and their fulfilment; but, as the prophecies could be suspected, He desires to make them above suspicion, &c.

577

God has made the blindness of this people subservient to the good of the elect.

578

There is sufficient clearness to enlighten the elect, and sufficient obscurity to humble them. There is sufficient obscurity to blind the reprobate, and sufficient clearness to condemn them, and make them inexcusable. — *Saint Augustine, Montaigne, Sebond.*

The genealogy of Jesus Christ in the Old Testament is intermingled with so many others that are useless, that it cannot be distinguished. If Moses had kept only the record of the ancestors of Christ, that might have been too plain. If he had not noted that of Jesus Christ, it might not have been sufficiently plain. But, after all, whoever looks closely sees that of Jesus Christ expressly traced through Tamar, Ruth, &c.

Those who ordained these sacrifices, knew their uselessness; those who have declared their uselessness, have not ceased to practise them.

If God had permitted only one religion, it had been too easily known; but when we look at it closely, we clearly discern the truth amidst this confusion.

The premiss. — Moses was a clever man. If then he ruled himself by his reason, he would say nothing clearly which was directly against reason.

Thus all the very apparent weaknesses are strength. Example; the two genealogies in Saint Matthew and Saint Luke. What can be clearer than that this was not concerted?

579

God (and the Apostles), foreseeing that the seeds of pride would make heresies spring up, and being unwilling to give them occasion to arise from correct expressions, has put in Scripture and the prayers of the Church contrary words and sentences to produce their fruit in time.

So in morals He gives charity, which produces fruits contrary to lust.

580

Nature has some perfections to show that she is the image of God, and some defects to show that she is only His image.

581

God prefers rather to incline the will than the intellect. Perfect clearness would be of use to the intellect, and would harm the will. To humble pride.

582

We make an idol of truth itself; for truth apart from charity is not God, but His image and idol, which we must neither love nor worship; and still less must we love or worship its opposite, namely, falsehood.

I can easily love total darkness; but if God keeps me in a state of semi-darkness, such partial darkness displeases me, and, because I do not see therein the advantage of total darkness, it is unpleasant to me. This is a fault, and a sign that I make for myself an idol of darkness, apart from the order of God. Now only His order must be worshipped.

583

The feeble-minded are people who know the truth, but only affirm it so far as consistent with their own interest. But, apart from that, they renounce it.

584

The world exists for the exercise of mercy and judgment, not as if men were placed in it out of the hands of God, but as hostile to God; and to them He grants by grace sufficient light, that they may return to Him, if they desire to seek and follow Him; and also that they may be punished, if they refuse to seek or follow Him.

585

That God has willed to hide Himself. — If there were only one religion, God would indeed be manifest. The same would be the case, if there were no martyrs but in our religion.

God being thus hidden, every religion which does not affirm that God is hidden, is not true; and every religion which does not give the reason of it, is not instructive. Our religion does, all this: *Vere tu es Deus absconditus.*

586

If there were no obscurity, man would not be sensible of his corruption; if there were no light, man would not hope for a remedy. Thus, it is not only fair, but advantageous to us, that God be partly hidden and partly revealed; since it is equally dangerous to man to know God without knowing his own wretchedness, and to know his own wretchedness without knowing God.

587

This religion, so great in miracles, saints, blameless Fathers, learned and great witnesses, martyrs, established kings as David, and Isaiah, a prince of the blood, and so great in science, after having displayed all her miracles and all her wisdom, rejects all this, and declares that she has neither wisdom nor signs, but only the cross and foolishness.

For those, who, by these signs and that wisdom, have deserved your belief, and who have proved to you their character, declare to you that nothing of all this can change you, and render you capable of knowing and loving God, but the power of the foolishness of the cross without wisdom and signs, and not the signs without this power. Thus our religion is foolish in respect to the effective cause, and wise in respect to the wisdom which prepares it.

588

Our religion is wise and foolish. Wise, because it is the most learned, and the most founded on miracles, prophecies, &c. Foolish, because it is not all this which makes us belong to it. This makes us indeed condemn those who do not belong to it; but it does not cause belief in those who do belong to it. It is the cross that makes them believe, *ne evacuata sit crux*. And so Saint Paul, who came with wisdom and signs, says that he has come neither with wisdom nor with signs; for he came to convert. But those who come only to convince, can say that they come with wisdom and with signs.

SECTION IX. Perpetuity

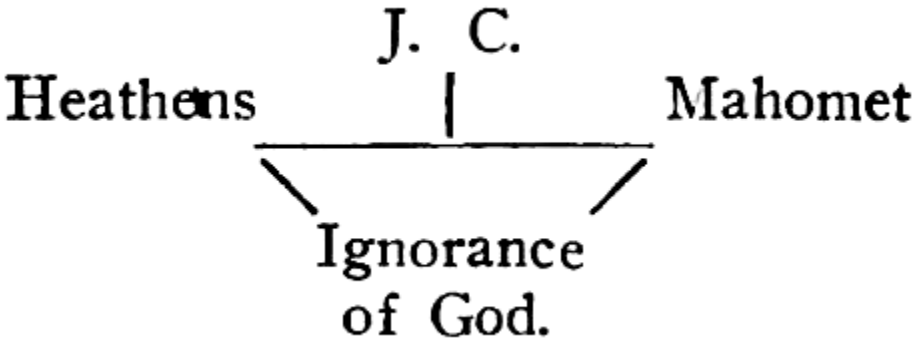
589

ON THE FACT that the Christian religion is not the only religion. — So far is this from being a reason for believing that it is not the true one, that, on the contrary, it makes us see that it is so.

590

Men must be sincere in all religions; true heathens, true Jews, true Christians.

591



592

The falseness of other religions. — They have no witnesses. The Jews have. God defies other religions to produce such signs: Isaiah xviii. 9; xliv. 8.

593

History of China.—I believe only the histories, whose witnesses got themselves killed.

[Which is the more credible of the two, Moses or China?]

It is not a question of seeing this summarily. I tell you there is in it something to blind, and something to enlighten.

By this one word I destroy all your reasoning. "But China obscures," say you; and I answer, "China obscures, but there is clearness to be found; seek it."

Thus all that you say makes for one of the views, and not at all against the other. So this serves, and does no harm.

We must then see this in detail; we must put the papers on the table.

594

Against the history of China. The historians of Mexico, the five suns, of which the last is only eight hundred years old.

The difference between a book accepted by a nation, and one which makes a nation.

595

Mahomet was without authority. His reasons then should have been very strong, having only their own force. What does he say then, that we must believe him?

596

The Psalms are chanted throughout the whole world.

Who renders testimony to Mahomet? Himself. Jesus Christ desires His own testimony to be as nothing.

The quality of witnesses necessitates their existence always and everywhere; and he, miserable creature, is alone.

597

Against Mahomet. — The Koran is not more of Mahomet than the Gospel is of Saint Matthew, for it is cited by many authors from age to age. Even its very enemies, Celsus and Porphyry, never denied it.

The Koran says Saint Matthew was an honest man. Therefore Mahomet was a false prophet for calling honest men wicked, or for not agreeing with what they have said of Jesus Christ.

598

It is not by that which is obscure in Mahomet, and which may be interpreted in a mysterious sense, that I would have him judged, but by what is clear, as his paradise and the rest. In that he is ridiculous. And since what is clear is ridiculous, it is not right to take his obscurities for mysteries.

It is not the same with the Scripture. I agree that there are in it obscurities as strange as those of Mahomet; but there are admirably clear passages, and the prophecies are manifestly fulfilled. The cases are therefore not on a par. We must not confound, and put on one level things which only resemble each other in their obscurity, and not in the clearness, which requires us to reverence the obscurities.

599

The difference between Jesus Christ and Mahomet. — Mahomet was not foretold; Jesus Christ was foretold.

Mahomet slew; Jesus Christ caused His own to be slain.

Mahomet forbade reading; the Apostles ordered reading.

In fact the two are so opposed, that if Mahomet took the way to succeed from a worldly point of view, Jesus Christ, from the same point of view, took the way to perish. And instead of concluding that, since Mahomet succeeded, Jesus Christ might well have succeeded, we ought to say that since Mahomet succeeded, Jesus Christ should have failed.

600

Any man can do what Mahomet has done; for he performed no miracles, he was not foretold. No man can do what Christ has done.

601

The heathen religion has no foundation [at the present day. It is said once to have had a foundation by the oracles which spoke. But what are the books which assure us of this? Are they so worthy of belief on account of the virtue of their authors? Have they been preserved with such care that we can be sure that they have not been meddled with?]

The Mahometan religion has for a foundation the Koran and Mahomet. But has this prophet, who was to be the last hope of the world, been foretold? What sign has he that every other man has not, who chooses to call himself a prophet? What miracles does he himself say that he has done? What mysteries has he taught, even according to his own tradition? What was the morality, what the happiness held out by him?

The Jewish religion must be differently regarded in the tradition of the Holy Bible, and in the tradition of the people. Its morality and happiness are absurd in the tradition of the people, but are admirable in that of the Holy Bible. (And all religion is the same; for the Christian religion is very different in the Holy Bible and in the casuists.) The foundation is admirable; it is the most ancient book in the world, and the most authentic; and whereas Mahomet, in order to make his own book continue in existence, forbade men to read it, Moses, for the same reason, ordered every one to read his.

Our religion is so divine that another divine religion has only been the foundation of it.

602

Order. — To see what is clear and indisputable in the whole state of the Jews.

603

The Jewish religion is wholly divine in its authority, its duration, its perpetuity, its morality, its doctrine, and its effects.

604

The only science contrary to common sense and human nature is that alone which has always existed among men.

605

The only religion contrary to nature, to common sense, and to our pleasure, is that alone which has always existed.

606

No religion but our own has taught that man is born in sin. No sect of philosophers has said this. Therefore none have declared the truth.

No sect or religion has always existed on earth, but the Christian religion.

607

Whoever judges of the Jewish religion by its coarser forms will misunderstand it. It is to be seen in the Holy Bible, and in the tradition of the prophets, who have made it plain enough that they did not interpret the law according to the letter. So our religion is divine in the Gospel, in the Apostles, and in tradition; but it is absurd in those who tamper with it.

The Messiah, according to the carnal Jews, was to be a great temporal prince. Jesus Christ, according to carnal Christians, has come to dispense us from the love of God, and to give us sacraments which shall do everything without our

help. Such is not the Christian religion, nor the Jewish. True Jews and true Christians have always expected a Messiah who should make them love God, and by that love triumph over their enemies.

608

The carnal Jews hold a midway place between Christians and heathens. The heathens know not God, and love the world only. The Jews know the true God, and love the world only. The Christians know the true God, and love not the world. Jews and heathens love the same good. Jews and Christians know the same God.

The Jews were of two kinds; the first had only heathen affections, the other had Christian affections.

609

There are two kinds of men in each religion: among the heathen, worshippers of beasts, and the worshippers of the one only God of natural religion; among the Jews, the carnal, and the spiritual, who were the Christians of the old law; among Christians, the coarser-minded, who are the Jews of the new law. The carnal Jews looked for a carnal Messiah; the coarser Christians believe that the Messiah has dispensed them from the love of God; true Jews and true Christians worship a Messiah who makes them love God.

610

To show that the true Jews and the true Christians have but the same religion. — The religion of the Jews seemed to consist essentially in the fatherhood of Abraham, in circumcision, in sacrifices, in ceremonies, in the Ark, in the temple, in Jerusalem, and, finally, in the law, and in the covenant with Moses.

I say that it consisted in none of those things, but only in the love of God, and that God disregarded all the other things.

That God did not accept the posterity of Abraham.

That the Jews were to be punished like strangers, if they transgressed. *Deut.* viii, 19: "If thou do at all forget the Lord thy God, and walk after other gods, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish, as the nations which the Lord destroyeth before your face."

That strangers, if they loved God, were to be received by Him as the Jews. *Isaiah* lvi, 3: "Let not the stranger say, 'The Lord will not receive me.' The strangers who join themselves unto the Lord to serve Him and love Him, will I bring unto my holy mountain, and accept therein sacrifices, for mine house is a house of prayer."

That the true Jews considered their merit to be from God only, and not from Abraham. *Isaiah* lxiii, 16: "Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not. Thou art our Father and our Redeemer."

Moses himself told them that God would not accept persons. *Deut.* x. 17: "God," said he, "regardeth neither persons nor sacrifices."

The Sabbath was only a sign, *Exod.* xxxi, 13; and in memory of the escape from Egypt, *Deut.* v, 19. Therefore it is no longer necessary, since Egypt must be forgotten.

Circumcision was only a sign, *Gen.* xvii, 11. And thence it came to pass that, being in the desert, they were not circumcised, because they could not be confounded with other peoples; and after Jesus Christ came, it was no longer necessary.

That the circumcision of the heart is commanded. *Deut.* x. 16; *Jeremiah* iv, 4: "Be ye circumcised in heart; take away the superfluities of your heart, and harden yourselves not. For your God is a mighty God, strong and terrible, who accepteth not persons."

That God said He would one day do it. *Deut.* xxx, 6: "God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, that thou mayest love Him with all thine heart."

That the uncircumcised in heart shall be judged. *Jeremiah* ix, 26: For God will judge the uncircumcised peoples, and all the people of Israel, because he is "uncircumcised in heart."

That the external is of no avail apart from the internal. *Joel* ii, 13: *Scindite corda vestra*, &c.; *Isaiah* lviii, 3, 4, &c.

The love of God is enjoined in the whole of Deuteronomy. *Deut.* xxx. 19: "I call heaven and earth to record that I have set before you life and death, that you should choose life, and love God, and obey Him, for God is your life."

That the Jews, for lack of that love, should be rejected for their offences, and the heathen chosen in their stead. *Hosea* i, 10; *Deut.* xxxii, 20. "I will hide myself from them in view of their latter sins, for they are a froward generation without faith. They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God, and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people, and with an ignorant and foolish nation." *Isaiah* lxv, 1.

That temporal goods are false, and that the true good is to be united to God. *Psalm* cxliii, 15.

That their feasts are displeasing to God. *Amos,* v. 21.

That the sacrifices of the Jews displeased God. *Isaiah,* lxvi. 1-3; i. 11; *Jer.,* vi. 20; David, *Miserere.* — Even on the part of the good, *Expectavi*. *Psalm* xlix, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14.

That He has established them only for their hardness. *Micah*, admirably, vi.; 1 *Kings,* xv. 22; *Hosea,* vi. 6.

That the sacrifices of the Gentiles will be accepted of God, and that God will take no pleasure in the sacrifices of the Jews. *Malachi,* i. 11.

That God will make a new covenant with the Messiah, and the old will be annulled. *Jer.* xxxi. 31. *Mandata non bona. Ezek.*

That the old things will be forgotten. *Isaiah* xliii. 18, 19; lxv. 17, 18.

That the Ark will no longer be remembered. *Jer.* iii. 15.

That the temple should be rejected. *Jer.* vii. 12, 13, 14.

That the sacrifices should be rejected, and other pure sacrifices established. *Malachi* i. 11.

That the order of Aaron's priesthood should be rejected, and that of Melchizedek introduced by the Messiah. *Ps. Dixit Dominus.*

That this priesthood should be eternal. *Ibid.*

That Jerusalem should be rejected, and Rome admitted. *Ps. Dixit Dominus.*

That the name of the Jews should be rejected, and a new name given. *Isaiah* lxv. 15.

That this last name should be more excellent than that of the Jews, and eternal. *Isaiah* lvi. 5.

That the Jews should be without prophets (Amos), without a king, without princes, without sacrifice, without an idol.

That the Jews should nevertheless always remain a people. *Jer.* xxxi. 36.

611

Republic. — The Christian republic — and even the Jewish — has only had God for ruler, as Philo the Jew notices, *On Monarchy*.

When they fought, it was for God only; their chief hope was in God only; they considered their towns as belonging to God only, and kept them for God. 1 *Chron.* xix. 13.

612

Gen. xvii. 7. *Statuam pactum meum inter me et te fœdere sempiterno ut sim Deus tuus.*

9. Et tu ergo custodies pactum meum.

613

Perpetuity. — That religion has always existed on earth, which consists in believing that man has fallen from a state of glory and of communion with God

into a state of sorrow, penitence, and estrangement from God, but that after this life we shall be restored by a Messiah who should have come. All things have passed away, and this has endured, for which all things are.

Men have in the first age of the world been carried away into every kind of debauchery, and yet there were saints, as Enoch, Lamech, and others, who waited patiently for the Christ promised from the beginning of the world. Noah saw the wickedness of men at its height; and he was held worthy to save the world in his person, by the hope of the Messiah of whom he was the type. Abraham was surrounded by idolaters, when God made known to him the mystery of the Messiah, whom he welcomed from afar. In the time of Isaac and Jacob abomination was spread over all the earth; but these saints lived in faith; and Jacob, dying and blessing his children, cried in a transport which made him break off his discourse, "I await, O my God, the Saviour whom Thou hast promised. *Salutare tuum expectabo, Domine.*" The Egyptians were infected both with idolatry and magic; the very people of God were led astray by their example. Yet Moses and others believed Him whom they saw not, and worshipped Him, looking to the eternal gifts which He was preparing for them.

The Greeks and Latins then set up false deities; the poets made a hundred different theologies, while the philosophers separated into a thousand different sects; and yet in the heart of Judæa there were always chosen men who foretold the coming of this Messiah, which was known to them alone.

He came at length in the fullness of time, and time has since witnessed the birth of so many schisms and heresies, so many political revolutions, so many changes in all things; yet this Church, which worships Him who has always been worshipped, has endured uninterruptedly. It is a wonderful, incomparable, and altogether divine fact that this religion, which has always endured, has always been attacked. It has been a thousand times on the eve of universal destruction, and every time it has been in that state, God has restored it by extraordinary acts of His power. This is astonishing, as also that it has preserved itself without yielding to the will of tyrants. For it is not strange that a State endures, when its

laws are sometimes made to give way to necessity, but that…(See the passage indicated in Montaigne.)

614

States would perish if they did not often make their laws give way to necessity. But religion has never suffered this, or practised it. Indeed, there must be these compromises, or miracles. It is not strange to be saved by yielding, and this is not strictly self-preservation; besides, in the end they perish entirely. None has endured a thousand years. But the fact that this religion has always maintained itself, inflexible as it is, proves its divinity.

615

Whatever may be said, it must be admitted that the Christian religion has something astonishing in it. Some will say, "This is because you were born in it." Far from it; I stiffen myself against it for this very reason, for fear this prejudice bias me. But although I am born in it, I cannot help finding it so.

616

Perpetuity. — The Messiah has always been believed in. The tradition from Adam was fresh in Noah and in Moses. Since then the prophets have foretold him, while at the same time foretelling other things, which, being from time to time fulfilled in the sight of men, showed the truth of their mission, and consequently that of their promises touching the Messiah. Jesus Christ performed miracles, and the Apostles also, who converted all the heathen; and all the prophecies being thereby fulfilled, the Messiah is for ever proved.

617

Perpetuity. — Let us consider that since the beginning of the world the expectation of worship of the Messiah has existed uninterruptedly; that there have been found men, who said that God had revealed to them that a Redeemer was to be born, who should save His people; that Abraham came afterwards, saying that he had had a revelation that the Messiah was to spring from him by a son, whom he should have; that Jacob declared that, of his twelve sons, the Messiah would spring from Judah; that Moses and the prophets then came to declare the time and the manner of His coming; that they said their law was only temporary till that of the Messiah, that it should endure till then, but that the other should last for ever; that thus either their law, or that of the Messiah, of which it was the promise, would be always upon the earth; that, in fact, it has always endured; that at last Jesus Christ came with all the circumstances foretold. This is wonderful.

618

This is positive fact. While all philosophers separate into different sects, there is found in one corner of the world the most ancient people in it, declaring that all the world is in error, that God has revealed to them the truth, that they will always exist on the earth. In fact, all other sects come to an end, this one still endures, and has done so for four thousand years.

They declare that they hold from their ancestors that man has fallen from communion with God, and is entirely estranged from God, but that He has promised to redeem them; that this doctrine shall always exist on the earth; that their law has a double signification; that during sixteen hundred years they have had people, whom they believed prophets, foretelling both the time and the manner; that four hundred years after they were scattered everywhere, because Jesus Christ was to be everywhere announced; that Jesus Christ came in the manner, and at the time foretold; that the Jews have since been scattered abroad under a curse, and nevertheless still exist.

619

I see the Christian religion founded upon a preceding religion, and this is what I find as a fact.

I do not here speak of the miracles of Moses, of Jesus Christ, and of the Apostles, because they do not at first seem convincing, and because I only wish here to put in evidence all those foundations of the Christian religion which are beyond doubt, and which cannot be called in question by any person whatsoever. It is certain that we see in many places of the world a peculiar people, separated from all other peoples of the world, and called the Jewish people.

I see then a crowd of religions in many parts of the world and in all times; but their morality cannot please me, nor can their proofs convince me. Thus I should equally have rejected the religion of Mahomet and of China, of the ancient Romans and of the Egyptians, for the sole reason, that none having more marks of truth than another, nor anything which should necessarily persuade me, reason cannot incline to one rather than the other.

But, in thus considering this changeable and singular variety of morals and beliefs at different times, I find in one corner of the world a peculiar people, separated from all other peoples on earth, the most ancient of all, and whose histories are earlier by many generations than the most ancient which we possess.

I find, then, this great and numerous people, sprung from a single man, who worship one God, and guide themselves by a law which they say that they obtained from His own hand. They maintain that they are the only people in the world to whom God has revealed His mysteries; that all men are corrupt and in disgrace with God; that they are all abandoned to their senses and their own imagination, whence come the strange errors and continual changes which happen among them, both of religions and of morals, whereas they themselves remain firm in their conduct; but that God will not leave other nations in this darkness for ever; that there will come a Saviour for all; that they are in the world to announce Him to men; that they are expressly formed to be forerunners and heralds of this great event, and to summon all nations to join with them in the expectation of this Saviour.

To meet with this people is astonishing to me, and seems to me worthy of attention. I look at the law which they boast of having obtained from God, and I find it admirable. It is the first law of all, and is of such a kind that, even before the term *law* was in currency among the Greeks, it had, for nearly a thousand years earlier, been uninterruptedly accepted and observed by the Jews. I likewise think it strange that the first law of the world happens to be the most perfect; so that the greatest legislators have borrowed their laws from it, as is apparent from the law of the Twelve Tables at Athens, afterwards taken by the Romans, and as it would be easy to prove, if Josephus and others had not sufficiently dealt with this subject.

620

Advantages of the Jewish people. — In this search the Jewish people at once attracts my attention by the number of wonderful and singular facts which appear about them.

I first see that they are a people wholly composed of brethren, and whereas all others are formed by the assemblage of an infinity of families, this, though so wonderfully fruitful, has all sprung from one man alone, and, being thus all one flesh, and members one of another, they constitute a powerful state of one family. This is unique.

This family, or people, is the most ancient within human knowledge, a fact which seems to me to inspire a peculiar veneration for it, especially in view of our present inquiry; since if God had from all time revealed Himself to men, it is to these we must turn for knowledge of the tradition.

This people is not eminent solely by their antiquity, but is also singular by their duration, which has always continued from their origin till now. For whereas the nations of Greece and of Italy, of Lacedæmon, of Athens and of Rome, and others who came long after, have long since perished, these ever remain, and in spite of the endeavours of many powerful kings who have a hundred times tried to destroy

them, as their historians testify, and as it is easy to conjecture from the natural order of things during so long a space of years, they have nevertheless been preserved (and this preservation has been foretold); and extending from the earliest times to the latest, their history comprehends in its duration all our histories [which it preceded by a long time].

The law by which this people is governed is at once the most ancient law in the world, the most perfect, and the only one which has been always observed without a break in a state. This is what Josephus admirably proves, *against Apion*, and also Philo the Jew, in different places, where they point out that it is so ancient that the very name of *law* was only known by the oldest nation more than a thousand years afterwards; so that Homer, who has written the history of so many states, has never used the term. And it is easy to judge of its perfection by simply reading it; for we see that it has provided for all things with so great wisdom, equity, and judgment, that the most ancient legislators, Greek and Roman, having had some knowledge of it, have borrowed from it their principal laws; this is evident from what are called the Twelve Tables, and from the other proofs which Josephus gives.

But this law is at the same time the severest and strictest of all in respect to their religious worship, imposing on this people, in order to keep them to their duty, a thousand peculiar and painful observances, on pain of death. Whence it is very astonishing that it has been constantly preserved during many centuries by a people, rebellious and impatient as this one was; while all other states have changed their laws from time to time, although these were far more lenient.

The book which contains this law, the first of all, is itself the most ancient book in the world, those of Homer, Hesiod, and others, being six or seven hundred years later.

621

The creation and the deluge being past, and God no longer requiring to destroy the world, nor to create it anew, nor to give such great signs of Himself, He began to establish a people on the earth, purposely formed, who were to last until the coming of the people whom the Messiah should fashion by His spirit.

622

The creation of the world beginning to be distant, God provided a single contemporary historian, and appointed a whole people as guardians of this book, in order that this history might be the most authentic in the world, and that all men might thereby learn a fact so necessary to know, and which could only be known through that means.

623

[Japhet begins the genealogy.]

Joseph folds his arms, and prefers to keep silent.

624

Why should Moses make the lives of men so long, and their generations so few?

Because it is not the length of years, but the multitude of generations, which renders things obscure. For truth is perverted only by the change of men. And yet he puts two things, the most memorable that were ever imagined, namely, the creation and the deluge, so near that we reach from one to the other.

625

Shem, who saw Lamech, who saw Adam, saw also Jacob, who saw those who saw Moses; therefore the deluge and the creation are true. This is conclusive among certain people who understand it rightly.

626

The longevity of the patriarchs, instead of causing the loss of past history, conduced, on the contrary, to its preservation. For the reason why we are sometimes insufficiently instructed in the history of our ancestors, is that we have never lived long with them, and that they are often dead before we have attained the age of reason. Now, when men lived so long, children lived long with their parents. They conversed long with them. But what else could be the subject of their talk save the history of their ancestors, since to that all history was reduced, and men did not study science or art, which now form a large part of daily conversation? We see also that in these days tribes took particular care to preserve their genealogies.

627

I believe that Joshua was the first of God's people to have this name, as Jesus Christ was the last of God's people.

628

Antiquity of the Jews. — What a difference there is between one book and another! I am not astonished that the Greeks made the Iliad, nor the Egyptians and the Chinese their histories.

We have only to see how this originates. These fabulous historians are not contemporaneous with the facts about which they write. Homer composes a romance, which he gives out as such, and which is received as such; for nobody doubted that Troy and Agamemnon no more existed than did the golden apple. Accordingly he did not think of making a history, but solely a book to amuse; he is the only writer of his time; the beauty of the work has made it last, every one learns it and talks of it, it is necessary to know it, and each one knows it by heart. Four hundred years afterwards the witnesses of these facts are no longer alive, no one knows of his own knowledge if it be a fable or a history; one has only learnt it from his ancestors, and this can pass for truth.

Every history which is not contemporaneous, as the books of the Sibyls and Trismegistus and so many others which have been believed by the world, are false, and found to be false in the course of time. It is not so with contemporaneous writers.

There is a great difference between a book which an individual writes, and publishes to a nation, and a book which itself creates a nation. We cannot doubt that the book is as old as the people.

629

Josephus hides the shame of his nation.

Moses does not hide his own shame.

Quis mihi det ut omnes prophetent?

He was weary of the multitude.

630

The sincerity of the Jews. — Maccabees, after they had no more prophets; the Masorah, since Jesus Christ.

This book will be a testimony for you.

Defective and final letters.

Sincere against their honour, and dying for it; this has no example in the world, and no root in nature.

631

Sincerity of the Jews. — They preserve lovingly and carefully the book in which Moses declares that they have been all their life ungrateful to God, and that he knows they will be still more so after his death; but that he calls heaven and earth to witness against them, and that he has [taught] them enough.

He declares that God, being angry with them, shall at last scatter them among all the nations of the earth; that as they have offended Him by worshipping gods

who were not their God, so He will provoke them by calling a people who are not His people; that He desires that all His words be preserved for ever, and that His book be placed in the Ark of the Covenant to serve for ever as a witness against them.

Isaiah says the same thing, xxx.

632

On Esdras. — The story that the books were burnt with the temple proved false by Maccabees: "Jeremiah gave them the law."

The story that he recited the whole by heart. Josephus and Esdras point out *that he read the book*. Baronius, *Ann.*, : *Nullus penitus Hebræorum antiquorum reperitur qui tradiderit libros periisse et per Esdram esse restitutos, nisi in* IV. Esdræ.

The story that he changed the letters.

Philo, *in Vita Moysis: Illa lingua ac character quo antiquitus scripta est lex sic permansit usque ad* LXX.

Josephus says that the Law was in Hebrew when it was translated by the Seventy.

Under Antiochus and Vespasian, when they wanted to abolish the books, and when there was no prophet, they could not do so. And under the Babylonians, when no persecution had been made, and when there were so many prophets, would they have let them be burnt?

Josephus laughs at the Greeks who would not bear…

Tertullian. — *Perinde potuit abolefactam eam violentia cataclysmi in spiritu rursus reformare, quemadmodum et Hierosolymis Babylonia expugnatione deletis, omne instrumentum Judaicæ literaturæ per Esdram constat restauratum.*

He says that Noah could as easily have restored in spirit the book of Enoch, destroyed by the Deluge, as Esdras could have restored the Scriptures lost during the Captivity.

(Θεὸς) ἐν τῇ ἐπὶ Ναβουκοδόνοσορ αἰχμαλωσίᾳ τοῦ λαοῦ, διαφθαρεισῶν τῶν γραφῶν… ἐνέπνευσε Εσδρᾷ τῷ ἱερεῖ ἐκ τῆς φυλῆς Λευὶ τοῦς τῶν προγεγονότων προφητῶν πάντας ἀνατάξασθαι λόγους, καὶ ἀποκαταστῆσαι τῷ λαῷ τὴν διὰ Μωυσέως νομοθεσίαν. He alleges this to prove that it is not incredible that the Seventy may have explained the holy Scriptures with that uniformity which we admire in them. And he took that from Saint Irenæus.

Saint Hilary, in his preface to the Psalms, says that Esdras arranged the Psalms in order.

The origin of this tradition comes from the 14th chapter of the fourth book of Esdras. *Deus glorificatus est, et Scripturæ vere divinæ creditæ sunt, omnibus eandem et eisdem verbis et eisdem nominibus recitantibus ab initio usque ad finem, uti et præsentes gentes cognoscerent quoniam per inspirationem Dei interpretatæ sunt Scripturæ et non esset mirabile Deum hoc in eis operatum: quando in ea captivitate populi quæ facta est a Nabuchodonosor, corruptis scripturis et post 70 annos Judæis descendentibus in regionem suam, et post deinde temporibus Artaxercis Persarum regis, inspiravit Esdræ sacerdoti tribus Levi præteritorum prophetarum omnes rememorare sermones, et restituere populo eam legem quæ data est per Moysen.*

633

Against the story in Esdras, II. Maccab., ii; — Josephus, *Antiquities*, II. i. — Cyrus took occasion from the prophecy of Isaiah to release the people. The Jews held their property in peace under Cyrus in Babylon; hence they could well have the Law.

Josephus, in the whole history of Esdras, does not say one word about this restoration. — II. Kings xvii. 27.

634

If the story in Esdras is credible, then it must be believed that the Scripture is Holy Scripture; for this story is based only on the authority of those who assert that of the Seventy, which shows that the Scripture is holy.

Therefore if this account be true, we have what we want therein; if not, we have it elsewhere. And thus those who would ruin the truth of our religion, founded on Moses, establish it by the same authority by which they attack it. So by this providence it still exists.

635

Chronology of Rabbinism. (The citations of pages are from the book *Pugio*.)

Page 27. R. Hakadosch (*anno* 200), author of the *Mischna*, or vocal law, or second law.

Commentaries on the *Mischna* (*anno* 340): The one *Siphra*.

Barajetot.

Talmud Hierosol.

Tosiphtot.

Bereschit Rabah, by R. Osaiah Rabah, commentary on the *Mischna*.

Bereschit Rabah, Bar Naconi, are subtle and pleasant discourses, historical and theological. This same author wrote the books called *Rabot*.

A hundred years after the *Talmud Hierosol* was composed the *Babylonian Talmud*, by R. Ase, A.D. 440, by the universal consent of all the Jews, who are necessarily obliged to observe all that is contained therein.

The addition of R. Ase is called the *Gemara*, that is to say, the "commentary" on the *Mischna*. And the Talmud includes together the *Mischna* and the *Gemara*.

636

If does not indicate indifference: Malachi, Isaiah.

Is., Si volumus, &c.

In quacumque die.

637

Prophecies. — The sceptre was not interrupted by the captivity in Babylon, because the return was promised and foretold.

638

Proofs of Jesus Christ. — Captivity, with the assurance of deliverance within seventy years, was not real captivity. But now they are captives without any hope.

God has promised them that even though He should scatter them to the ends of the earth, nevertheless if they were faithful to His law, He would assemble them together again. They are very faithful to it, and remain oppressed.

639

When Nebuchadnezzar carried away the people, for fear they should believe that the sceptre had departed from Judah, they were told beforehand that they would be there for a short time, and that they would be restored. They were always consoled by the prophets; and their kings continued. But the second destruction is without promise of restoration, without prophets, without kings, without consolation, without hope, because the sceptre is taken away for ever.

640

It is a wonderful thing, and worthy of particular attention, to see this Jewish people existing so many years in perpetual misery, it being necessary as a proof of Jesus Christ, both that they should exist to prove Him, and that they should be miserable because they crucified Him; and though to be miserable and to exist are contradictory, they nevertheless still exist in spite of their misery.

641

They are visibly a people expressly created to serve as a witness to the Messiah (*Isaiah*, xliii. 9; xliv. 8). They keep the books, and love them, and do not understand them. And all this was foretold; that God's judgments are entrusted to them, but as a sealed book.

SECTION X. Typology

642



PROOF OF THE two Testaments at once. — To prove the two at one stroke, we need only see if the prophecies in one are fulfilled in the other. To examine the prophecies, we must understand them. For if we believe they have only one meaning, it is certain that the Messiah has not come; but if they have two meanings, it is certain that He has come in Jesus Christ.

The whole problem then is to know if they have two meanings.

That the Scripture has two meanings, which Jesus Christ and the Apostles have given, is shown by the following proofs:

1. Proof by Scripture itself.

2. Proof by the Rabbis. Moses Maimonides says that it has two aspects, and that the prophets have prophesied Jesus Christ only.

3. Proof by the Kabbala.

4. Proof by the mystical interpretation which the Rabbis themselves give to Scripture.

5. Proof by the principles of the Rabbis, that there are two meanings; that there are two advents of the Messiah, a glorious and humiliating one, according to their desert ; that the prophets have prophesied of the Messiah only — the Law is not eternal, but must change at the coming of the Messiah — that then they shall no more remember the Red Sea; that the Jews and the Gentiles shall be mingled.

[6. Proof by the key which Jesus Christ and the Apostles give us.]

643

Isaiah, 1i. The Red Sea an image of the Redemption. *Ut sciatis quod filius hominis habet potestatem remittendi peccata, tibi dico: Surge.* God, wishing to show that He could form a people holy with an invisible holiness, and fill them with an eternal glory, made visible things. As nature is an image of grace. He has done in the bounties of nature what He would do in those of grace, in order that we might judge that He could make the invisible, since He made the visible excellently.

Therefore He saved this people from the deluge; He has raised them up from Abraham, redeemed them from their enemies, and set them at rest.

The object of God was not to save them from the deluge, and raise up a whole people from Abraham, only in order to bring them into a rich land.

And even grace is only the type of glory, for it is not the ultimate end. It has been symbolised by the law, and itself symbolises [*glory*]. But it is the type of it, and the origin or cause.

The ordinary life of men is like that of the saints. They all seek their satisfaction, and differ only in the object in which they place it; they call those their enemies who hinder them, &c. God has then shown the power which He has of giving invisible blessings, by that which He has shown Himself to have over things visible.

644

Types. — God, wishing to form for Himself an holy people, whom He should separate from all other nations, whom He should deliver from their enemies and should put into a place of rest, has promised to do so, and has foretold by His prophets the time and the manner of His coming. And yet, to confirm the hope of His elect. He has made them see it in an image through all time, without leaving them devoid of assurances of His power and of His will to save them. For, at the creation of man, Adam was the witness and guardian of the promise of a Saviour, who should be born of woman, when men were still so near the creation that they

could not have forgotten their creation and their fall. When those who had seen Adam were no longer in the world, God sent Noah whom He saved, and drowned the whole earth by a miracle which sufficiently indicated the power which He had to save the world, and the will which He had to do so, and to raise up from the seed of woman Him whom He had promised. This miracle was enough to confirm the hope of men.

The memory of the deluge being so fresh among men, while Noah was still alive, God made promises to Abraham, and, while Shem was still living, sent Moses, &c. …

645

Types. — God, willing to deprive His own of perishable blessings, created the Jewish people in order to show that this was not owing to lack of power.

646

The Synagogue did not perish, because it was a type. But because it was only a type, it fell into servitude. The type existed till the truth came, in order that the Church should be always visible, either in the sign which promised it, or in substance.

647

That the law was figurative.

648

Two errors: 1. To take everything literally. 2. To take everything spiritually.

649

To speak against too greatly figurative language.

650

There are some types clear and demonstrative, but others which seem somewhat far-fetched, and which convince only those who are already persuaded. These are like the Apocalyptics. But the difference is that they have none which are certain, so that nothing is so unjust as to claim that theirs are as well founded as some of ours; for they have none so demonstrative as some of ours. The comparison is unfair. We must not put on the same level, and confound things, because they seem to agree in one point, while they are so different in another. The clearness in divine things requires us to revere the obscurities in them.

[It is like men, who employ a certain obscure language among themselves. Those who should not understand it, would understand only a foolish meaning.]

651

Extravagances of the Apocalyptics, Preadamites, Millenarians, &c. — He who would base extravagant opinions on Scripture, will, for example, base them on this. It is said that "this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled." Upon that I will say that after that generation will come another generation, and so on ever in succession.

Solomon and the King are spoken of in the second book of Chronicles, as if they were two different persons. I will say that they were two.

652

Particular Types. — A double law, double tables of the law, a double temple, a double captivity.

653

Types. — The prophets prophesied by symbols of a girdle, a beard and burnt hair, &c.

654

Difference between dinner and supper.

In God the word does not differ from the intention, for He is true; nor the word from the effect, for He is powerful; nor the means from the effect, for He is wise. Bern., *ult. sermo in Missam.*

Augustine, *de Civit. Dei*, v. 10. This rule is general. God can do everything, except those things, which if He could do, He would not be almighty, as dying, being deceived, lying, &c.

Many Evangelists for the confirmation of the truth: their difference useful.

The Eucharist after the Lord's Supper. Truth after the type.

The ruin of Jerusalem, a type of the ruin of the world, forty years after the death of Jesus. "I know not," as a man, or as an ambassador (Mark xiii. 32).

Jesus condemned by the Jews and the Gentiles.

The Jews and the Gentiles typified by the two sons. Aug. *de Civ*. xx. 29.

655

The six ages, the six Fathers of the six ages, the six wonders at the beginning of the six ages, the six mornings at the beginning of the six ages.

656

Adam *forma futuri.* The six days to form the one, the six ages to form the other. The six days, which Moses represents for the formation of Adam, are only the picture of the six ages to form Jesus Christ and the Church. If Adam had not sinned, and Jesus Christ had not come, there had been only one covenant, only one age of men, and the creation would have been represented as accomplished at one single time.

657

Types. — The Jewish and Egyptian peoples were plainly foretold by the two individuals whom Moses met; the Egyptian beating the Jew, Moses avenging him and killing the Egyptian, and the Jew being ungrateful.

658

The symbols of the Gospel for the state of the sick soul are sick bodies; but because one body cannot be sick enough to express it well, several have been needed. Thus there are the deaf, the dumb, the blind, the paralytic, the dead Lazarus, the possessed. All this crowd is in the sick soul.

659

Types. — To show that the Old Testament is only figurative, and that the prophets understood by temporal blessings other blessings, this is the proof: —

First, that this would be unworthy of God.

Secondly, that their discourses express very clearly the promise of temporal blessings, and that they say nevertheless that their discourses are obscure, and that their meaning will not be understood. Whence it appears that this secret meaning was not that which they openly expressed, and that consequently they meant to speak of other sacrifices, of another deliverer, &c. They say that they will be understood only in the fulness of time (Jer. xxx. *ult*.).

The third proof is that their discourses are contradictory, and neutralise each other; so that if we think that they did not mean by the words "law" and "sacrifice" anything else than that of Moses, there is a plain and gross contradiction. Therefore they meant something else, sometimes contradicting themselves in the same chapter. Now to understand the meaning of an author…

660

Lust has become natural to us, and has made our second nature. Thus there are two natures in us — the one good, the other bad. Where is God? Where you are

not, and the kingdom of God is within you. The Rabbis.

661

Penitence, alone of all these mysteries, has been manifestly declared to the Jews, and by Saint John, the Forerunner; and then the other mysteries; to indicate that in each man, as in the entire world, this order must be observed.

662

The carnal Jews understood neither the greatness nor the humiliation of the Messiah foretold in their prophecies. They misunderstood Him in His foretold greatness, as when He said that the Messiah should be lord of David, though his son, and that He was before Abraham, who had seen Him. They did not believe Him so great as to be eternal, and they likewise misunderstood Him in His humiliation and in His death. "The Messiah," said they, "abideth for ever, and this man says that he shall die." Therefore they believed Him neither mortal nor eternal; they only sought in Him for a carnal greatness.

663

Typical. — Nothing is so like charity as covetousness, and nothing is so opposed to it. Thus the Jews, full of possessions which flattered their covetousness, were very like Christians, and very contrary. And by this means they had the two qualities which it was necessary they should have, to be very like the Messiah to typify Him, and very contrary not to be suspected witnesses.

664

Typical. — God made use of the lust of the Jews to make them minister to Jesus Christ, [who brought the remedy for their lust].

665

Charity is not a figurative precept. It is dreadful to say that Jesus Christ, who came to take away types in order to establish the truth, came only to establish the type of charity, in order to take away the existing reality which was there before.

"If the light be darkness, how great is that darkness!"

666

Fascination. *Somnum suum. Figura hujus mundi.*

The Eucharist. *Comedes panem tuum. Panem nostrum.*

Inimici Dei terram lingent. Sinners lick the dust, that is to say, love earthly pleasures.

The Old Testament contained the types of future joy, and the New contains the means of arriving at it. The types were of joy; the means of penitence; and nevertheless the Paschal Lamb was eaten with bitter herbs, *cum amaritudinibus.*

Singularis sum ego donec transeam. — Jesus Christ before His death was almost the only martyr.

667

Typical. — The expressions, sword, shield. *Potentissime.*

668

We are estranged, only by departing from charity. Our prayers and our virtues are abominable before God, if they are not the prayers and the virtues of Jesus Christ. And our sins will never be the object of [mercy], but of the justice of God, if they are not [those of] Jesus Christ. He has adopted our sins, and has [admitted] us into union [with Him], for virtues are [His own, and] sins are foreign to Him; while virtues [are] foreign to us, and our sins are our own.

Let us change the rule which we have hitherto chosen for judging what is good. We had our own will as our rule. Let us now take the will of [God]; all that He wills is good and right to us, all that He does not will is [bad].

All that God does not permit is forbidden. Sins are forbidden by the general declaration that God has made, that He did not allow them. Other things which He has left without general prohibition, and which for that reason are said to be permitted, are nevertheless not always permitted. For when God removes some one of them from us, and when, by the event, which is a manifestation of the will of God, it appears that God does not will that we should have a thing, that is then forbidden to us as sin; since the will of God is that we should not have one more than another. There is this sole difference between these two things, that it is certain that God will never allow sin, while it is not certain that He will never allow the other. But so long as God does not permit it, we ought to regard it as sin; so long as the absence of God's will, which alone is all goodness and all justice, renders it unjust and wrong.

669

To change the type, because of our weakness.

670

Types. — The Jews had grown old in these earthly thoughts, that God loved their father Abraham, his flesh and what sprung from it; that on account of this He had multiplied them, and distinguished them from all other nations, without allowing them to intermingle; that when they were languishing in Egypt, He brought them out with all these great signs in their favour; that He fed them with manna in the desert, and led them into a very rich land; that He gave them kings and a well-built temple, in order to offer up beasts before Him, by the shedding of whose blood they should be purified; and that at last He was to send them the Messiah to make them masters of all the world, and foretold the time of His coming.

The world having grown old in these carnal errors, Jesus Christ came at the time foretold, but not with the expected glory; and thus men did not think it was He. After His death, Saint Paul came to teach men that all these things had

happened in allegory; that the kingdom of God did not consist in the flesh, but In the spirit; that the enemies of men were not the Babylonians, but the passions; that God delighted not in temples made with hands, but in a pure and contrite heart; that the circumcision of the body was unprofitable, but that of the heart was needed; that Moses had not given them the bread from heaven, &c.

But God, not having desired to reveal these things to this people who were unworthy of them, and having nevertheless desired to foretell them, in order that they might be believed, foretold the time clearly, and expressed the things sometimes clearly, but very often in figures, in order that those who loved symbols might consider them, and those who loved what was symbolized might see it therein.

All that tends not to charity is figurative.

The sole aim of the Scripture is charity.

All which tends not to the sole end is the type of it. For since there is only one end, all which does not lead to it in express terms is figurative.

God thus varies that sole precept of charity to satisfy our curiosity, which seeks for variety, by that variety which still leads us to the one thing needful. For one thing alone is needful, and we love variety; and God satisfies both by these varieties, which lead to the one thing needful.

The Jews have so much loved the shadows, and have so strictly expected them, that they have misunderstood the reality, when it came in the time and manner foretold..

The Rabbis take the breasts of the Spouse for types, and all that does not express the only end they have, namely, temporal good.

And Christians take even the Eucharist as a type of the glory at which they aim.

671

The Jews, who have been called to subdue nations and kings, have been the slaves of sin; and the Christians, whose calling has been to be servants and subjects, arc free children.

672

A formal point. — When Saint Peter and the Apostles deliberated about abolishing circumcision, where it was a question of acting against the law of God, they did not heed the prophets, but simply the reception of the Holy Spirit in the persons uncircumcised.

They thought it more certain that God approved of those whom He filled with His Spirit, than it was that the law must be obeyed. They knew that the end of the law was only the Holy Spirit; and that thus, as men certainly had this without circumcision, it was not necessary.

673

Fac secundum exemplar quod tibi ostensum est in monte. — The Jewish religion then has been formed on its likeness to the truth of the Messiah; and the truth of the Messiah has been recognised by the Jewish religion, which was the type of it.

Among the Jews the truth was only typified; in heaven it is revealed.

In the Church it is hidden, and recognised by its resemblance to the type.

The type has been made according to the truth, and the truth has been recognised according to the type.

Saint Paul says himself that people will forbid to marry, and he himself speaks of it to the Corinthians in a way which is a snare. For if a prophet has said the one, and Saint Paul had then said the other, he would have been accused.

674

Typical.— "Do all things according to the pattern which has been shown thee on the mount." On which Saint Paul says that the Jews have shadowed forth

heavenly things.

675

…And yet this Covenant, made to blind some and enlighten others, indicated in those very persons, whom it blinded, the truth which should be recognised by others. For the visible blessings which they received from God were so great and so divine, that He indeed appeared able to give them those that are invisible, and a Messiah.

For nature is an image of grace, and visible miracles are images of the invisible. *Ut sciatis…tibi dico: Surge.*

Isaiah says that Redemption will be as the passage of the Red Sea.

God has then shown by the deliverance from Egypt, and from the sea, by the defeat of kings, by the manna, by the whole genealogy of Abraham, that He was able to save, to send down bread from heaven, &c.; so that the people hostile to Him are the type and the representation of the very Messiah whom they know not, &c.

He has then taught us at last that all these things were only types, and what is "true freedom," a "true Israelite," "true circumcision," "true bread from heaven," &c.

In these promises each one finds what he has most at heart, temporal benefits or spiritual, God or the creatures; but with this difference, that those who therein seek the creatures find them, but with many contradictions, with a prohibition against loving them, with the command to worship God only, and to love Him only, which is the same thing, and, finally, that the Messiah came not for them; whereas those who therein seek God find Him, without any contradiction, with the command to love Him only, and that the Messiah came in the time foretold, to give them the blessings which they ask.

Thus the Jews had miracles and prophecies, which they saw fulfilled, and the teaching of their law was to worship and love God only; it was also perpetual.

Thus it had all the marks of the true religion; and so it was. But the Jewish teaching must be distinguished from the teaching of the Jewish law. Now the Jewish teaching was not true, although it had miracles and prophecy and perpetuity, because it had not this other point of worshipping and loving God only.

676

The veil, which is upon these books for the Jews, is there also for evil Christians, and for all who do not hate themselves.

But how well disposed men are to understand them and to know Jesus Christ, when they truly hate themselves!

677

A type conveys absence and presence, pleasure and pain.

A cipher has a double meaning, one clear, and one in which it is said that the meaning is hidden.

678

Types. — A portrait conveys absence and presence, pleasure and pain. The reality excludes absence and pain.

To know if the law and the sacrifices are a reality or a type, we must see if the prophets, in speaking of these things, confined their view and their thought to them, so that they saw only the old covenant; or if they saw therein something else of which they were the representation, for in a portrait we see the thing figured. For this we need only examine what they say of them.

When they say that it will be eternal, do they mean to speak of that covenant which they say will be changed; and so of the sacrifices, &c.?

A cipher has two meanings. When we find out an important letter in which we discover a clear meaning, and in which it is nevertheless said that the meaning is

veiled and obscure, that it is hidden, so that we might read the letter without seeing it, and interpret it without understanding it, what must we think but that here is a cipher with a double meaning, and the more so if we find obvious contradictions in the literal meaning? The prophets have clearly said that Israel would be always loved by God, and that the law would be eternal; and they have said that their meaning would not be understood, and that it was veiled.

How greatly then ought we to value those who interpret the cipher, and teach us to understand the hidden meaning, especially if the principles which they educe are perfectly clear and natural! This is what Jesus Christ did, and the Apostles. They broke the seal; He rent the veil, and revealed the spirit. They have taught us through this that the enemies of man are his passions; that the Redeemer would be spiritual, and His reign spiritual; that there would be two advents, one in lowliness to humble the proud, the other in glory to exalt the humble; that Jesus Christ would be both God and man.

679

Types. — Jesus Christ opened their mind to understand the Scriptures.

Two great revelations are these, (1.) All things happened to them in types: *vere Israelites, vere liberi,* true bread from Heaven. (2.) A God humbled to the Cross. It was necessary that Christ should suffer in order to enter into glory, "that He should destroy death through death." Two advents.

680

Types. — When once this secret is disclosed, it is impossible not to see it. Let us read the Old Testament in this light, and let us see if the sacrifices were real; if the fatherhood of Abraham was the true cause of the friendship of God; and if the promised land was the true place of rest. No. They are therefore types. Let us in the same way examine all those ordained ceremonies, all those commandments which are not of charity, and we shall see that they are types.

All these sacrifices and ceremonies were then either types or nonsense. Now there are things clear, and too lofty, to be thought nonsense.

To know if the prophets confined their view in the Old Testament, or saw therein other things.

681

Typical. — The key of the cipher. *Veri adoratores. — Ecce agnus Dei qui tollit peccata mundi.*

682

Is. i. 21. Change of good into evil, and the vengeance of God. Is. x. 1; xxvi. 20; xxviii. i. Miracles: Is. xxxiii. 9; xl. 17; xli. 26; xliii. 13.

Jer. xi. 21; xv. 12; xvii. 9. *Pravum est cor omnium et incrustabile; quis cognoscet illud?* that is to say, Who can know all its evil? For it is already known to be wicked. *Ego dominus,* &c. — *vii.* 14. *Faciam domui huic,* &c. — Trust in external sacrifices — vii. 22. *Quia non sum locutus, &c. Outward sacrifice is not the essential point — xi. 13.* Secundum numerum, *&c. A multitude of doctrines.*

Is. xliv. 20-24; liv. 8; lxiii. 12-17; lxvi. 17. Jer. ii.. 35; iv. 22-24; v. 4, 29-31; vi. 16; xxiii. 15-17.

683

Types. — The letter kills. All happened in types. Here is the cipher which Saint Paul gives us. Christ must suffer. An humiliated God. Circumcision of the heart, true fasting, true sacrifice, a true temple. The prophets have shown that all these must be spiritual.

Not the meat which perishes, but that which does not perish.

"Ye shall be free indeed." Then the other freedom was only a type of freedom.

"I am the true bread from Heaven."

Contradiction. — We can only describe a good character by reconciling all contrary qualities, and it is not enough to keep up a series of harmonious qualities without reconciling contradictory ones. To understand the meaning of an author, we must make all the contrary passages agree.

Thus, to understand Scripture, we must have a meaning in which all the contrary passages are reconciled. It is not enough to have one which suits many concurring passages; but it is necessary to have one which reconciles even contradictory passages.

Every author has a meaning in which all the contradictory passages agree, or he has no meaning at all. We cannot affirm the latter of Scripture and the prophets; they undoubtedly are full of good sense. We must then seek for a meaning which reconciles all discrepancies.

The true meaning then is not that of the Jews; but in Jesus Christ all the contradictions are reconciled.

The Jews could not reconcile the cessation of the royalty and principality, foretold by Hosea, with the prophecy of Jacob.

If we take the law, the sacrifices, and the kingdom as realities, we cannot reconcile all the passages. They must then necessarily be only types. We cannot even reconcile the passages of the same author, nor of the same book, nor sometimes of the same chapter, which indicates copiously what was the meaning of the author. As when Ezekiel, chap. xx., says that man will live by the commandments of God and will not live by them.

685

Types. — If the law and the sacrifices are the truth, it must please God, and must not displease Him. If they are types, they must be both pleasing and displeasing.

Now in all the Scripture they are both pleasing and displeasing. It is said that the law shall be changed; that the sacrifice shall be changed; that they shall be without law, without a prince, and without a sacrifice; that a new covenant shall

be made; that the law shall be renewed; that the precepts which they have received are not good; that their sacrifices are abominable; that God has demanded none of them.

It is said, on the contrary, that the law shall abide for ever; that this covenant shall be for ever; that sacrifice shall be eternal; that the sceptre shall never depart from among them, because it shall not depart from them till the eternal King comes.

Do all these passages indicate what is real? No. Do they then indicate what is typical? No, but what is either real or typical. But the first passages, excluding as they do reality, indicate that all this is only typical.

All these passages together cannot be applied to reality; all can be said to be typical; therefore they are not spoken of reality, but of the type.

Agnus occisus est ab origine mundi. A sacrificing judge.

686

Contradictions. — The sceptre till the Messiah, — without king or prince.

The eternal law, — changed.

The eternal covenant, — a new covenant.

Good laws, — bad precepts. Ezekiel.

687

Types. — When the word of God, which is really true, is false literally, it is true spiritually. *Sede a dextris meis:* this is false literally, therefore it is true spiritually.

In these expressions, God is spoken of after the manner of men; and this means nothing else but that the intention which men have in giving a seat at their right hand, God will have also. It is then an indication of the intention of God, not of His manner of carrying it out.

Thus when it is said, “God has received the odour of your incense, and will in recompense give you a rich land,” that is equivalent to saying that the same

intention which a man would have, who, pleased with your perfumes, should in recompense give you a rich land, God will have towards you, because you have had towards [Him] the same intention as a man has towards him, to whom he presents perfumes. So *iratus est*, a "jealous God," &c. For, the things of God being inexpressible, they cannot be spoken of otherwise, and the Church makes use of them even to-day: *Quia confortavit seras,* &c.

It is not allowable to attribute to Scripture the meaning which it has not revealed to us that it has. Thus, to say that the closed *mem* of Isaiah signifies six hundred, has not been revealed. It might be said that the final *tsadé* and the *he deficientes* may signify mysteries. But it is not allowable to say so, and still less to say this is the way of the philosopher's stone. But we say that the literal meaning is not the true meaning, because the prophets have themselves said so.

688

I do not say that the *mem* is mystical.

689

Moses (Deut. xxx.) promises that God will circumcise their heart to render them capable of loving Him.

690

One saying of David, or of Moses, as for instance that "God will circumcise the heart," enables us to judge of their spirit. If all their other expressions were ambiguous, and left us in doubt whether they were philosophers or Christians, one saying of this kind would in fact determine all the rest, as one sentence of Epictetus decides the meaning of all the rest to be the opposite. So far ambiguity exists, but not afterwards.

691

If one of two persons, who are telling silly stories, uses language with a double meaning, understood in his own circle, while the other uses it with only one meaning, any one not in the secret, who hears them both talk in this manner, will pass upon them the same judgment. But if afterwards, in the rest of their conversation one says angelic things, and the other always dull common-places, he will judge that the one spoke in mysteries, and not the other; the one having sufficiently shown that he is incapable of such foolishness, and capable of being mysterious; and the other that he is incapable of mystery, and capable of foolishness.

The Old Testament is a cipher.

692

There are some who see clearly that man has no other enemy than lust, which turns him from God, and not God; and that he has no other good than God, and not a rich land. Let those who believe that the good of man is in the flesh, and evil in what turns him away from sensual pleasures, [satiate] themselves with them, and [die] in them. But let those who seek God with all their heart, who are only troubled at not seeing Him, who desire only to possess Him, and have as enemies only those who turn them away from Him, who are grieved at seeing themselves surrounded and overwhelmed with such enemies, take comfort. I proclaim to them happy news. There exists a Redeemer for them. I shall show Him to them. I shall show that there is a God for them. I shall not show Him to others. I shall make them see that a Messiah has been promised, who should deliver them from their enemies, and that One has come to free them from their iniquities, but not from their enemies.

When David foretold that the Messiah would deliver His people from their enemies, one can believe that in the flesh these would be the Egyptians; and then I cannot show that the prophecy was fulfilled. But one can well believe also that the enemies would be their sins; for indeed the Egyptians were not their enemies,

but their sins were so. This word, enemies, is therefore ambiguous. But if he says elsewhere, as he does, that He will deliver His people from their sins, as indeed do Isaiah and others, the ambiguity is removed, and the double meaning of enemies is reduced to the simple meaning of iniquities. For if he had sins in his mind, he could well denote them as enemies; but if he thought of enemies, he could not designate them as iniquities.

Now Moses, David, and Isaiah used the same terms. Who will say then that they have not the same meaning, and that David's meaning, which is plainly iniquities when he spoke of enemies, was not the same as [that of] Moses when speaking of enemies?

Daniel (ix.) prays for the deliverance of the people from the captivity of their enemies. But he was thinking of sins, and to show this, he says that Gabriel came to tell him that his prayer was heard, and that there were only seventy weeks to wait, after which the people would be freed from iniquity, sin would have an end, and the Redeemer, the Holy of Holies, would bring *eternal* justice, not legal, but eternal.

SECTION XI. The Prophecies

693



WHEN I SEE the blindness and the wretchedness of man, when I regard the whole silent universe, and man without light, left to himself, and, as it were, lost in this corner of the universe, without knowing who has put him there, what he has come to do, what will become of him at death, and incapable of all knowledge, I become terrified, like a man who should be carried in his sleep to a dreadful desert island, and should awake without knowing where he is, and without means of escape. And thereupon I wonder how people in a condition so wretched do not fall into despair. I see other persons around me of a like nature. I ask them if they are better informed than I am. They tell me that they are not. And thereupon these wretched and lost beings, having looked around them, and seen some pleasing objects, have given and attached themselves to them. For my own part, I have not been able to attach myself to them, and, considering how strongly it appears that there is something else than what I see, I have examined whether this God has not left some sign of Himself.

I see many contradictory religions, and consequently all false save one. Each wants to be believed on its own authority, and threatens unbelievers. I do not therefore believe them. Every one can say this; every one can call himself a prophet. But I see the Christian religion wherein prophecies are fulfilled; and that is what every one cannot do.

694

And what crowns all this is prediction, so that it should not be said that it is chance which has done it.

Whosoever, having only a week to live, will not find out that it is expedient to believe that all this is not a stroke of chance…

Now, if the passions had no hold on us, a week and a hundred years would amount to the same thing.

695

Prophecies. — Great Pan is dead.

696

Susceperunt verbum cum omni aviditate, scrutantes Scripturas, si ita se haberent.

697

Prodita lege. — Impleta cerne. — Implenda collige.

698

We understand the prophecies only when we see the events happen. Thus the proofs of retreat, discretion, silence, &c., are proofs only to those who know and believe them.

Joseph so internal in a law so external.

Outward penances dispose to inward, as humiliations to humility. Thus the…

699

The synagogue has preceded the church; the Jews, the Christians. The prophets have foretold the Christians; Saint John, Jesus Christ.

700

It is glorious to see with the eyes of faith the history of Herod and of Caesar.

701

The zeal of the Jews for their law and their temple (*Josephus*, and *Philo the Jew, ad Caïum*). What other people had such a zeal? It was necessary they should have it.

Jesus Christ foretold as to the time and the state of the world. The ruler taken from the thigh, and the fourth monarchy. How lucky we are to see this light amidst this darkness!

How fine it is to see, with the eyes of faith, Darius and Cyrus, Alexander, the Romans, Pompey and Herod working, without knowing it, for the glory of the Gospel!

702

Zeal of the Jewish people for the law, especially after there were no more prophets.

703

While the prophets were for maintaining the law, the people were indifferent. But since there have been no more prophets, zeal has succeeded them.

704

The devil troubled the zeal of the Jews before Jesus Christ, because he would have been their salvation, but not since.

The Jewish people scorned by the Gentiles; the Christian people persecuted.

705

Proof. — Prophecies with their fulfilment; what has preceded and what has followed Jesus Christ.

706

The prophecies are the strongest proof of Jesus Christ. It is for them also that God has made most provision; for the event which has fulfilled them is a miracle existing since the birth of the Church to the end. So God has raised up prophets during sixteen hundred years, and, during four hundred years afterwards. He has scattered all these prophecies among all the Jews, who carried them into all parts of the world. Such was the preparation for the birth of Jesus Christ, and, as His Gospel was to be believed by all the world, it was not only necessary that there should be prophecies to make it believed, but that these prophecies should exist throughout the whole world, in order to make it embraced by the whole world.

707

But it was not enough that the prophecies should exist. It was necessary that they should be distributed throughout all places, and preserved throughout all times. And in order that this agreement might not be taken for an effect of chance, it was necessary that this should be foretold. It is far more glorious for the Messiah that the Jews should be the spectators, and even the instruments of His glory, besides that God had reserved them.

708

Prophecies. — The time foretold by the state of the Jewish people, by the state of the heathen, by the state of the temple, by the number of years.

709

One must be bold to predict the same thing in so many ways. It was necessary that the four idolatrous or pagan monarchies, the end of the kingdom of Judah, and the seventy weeks, should happen at the same time, and all this before the second temple was destroyed.

710

Prophecies. — If one man alone had made a book of predictions about Jesus Christ, as to the time and the manner, and Jesus Christ had come in conformity to these prophecies, this fact would have infinite weight.

But there is much more here. Here is a succession of men during four thousand years, who, constantly and without variation, come, one after another, to foretell this same event. Here is a whole people who announce it, and who have existed for four thousand years, in order to give corporate testimony of the assurances which they have, and from which they cannot be diverted by whatever threats and persecutions people may make against them. This is far more important.

711

Predictions of particular things. — They were strangers in Egypt, without any private property, either in that country or elsewhere. [There was not the least appearance, either of the royalty which had previously existed so long, or of that supreme council of seventy judges which they called the *Sanhedrin*, and which, having been instituted by Moses, lasted to the time of Jesus Christ. All these things were as far removed from their state at that time as they could be], when Jacob, dying, and blessing his twelve children, declared to them, that they would be proprietors of a great land, and foretold in particular to the family of Judah, that the kings, who would one day rule them, should be of his race; and that all his brethren should be their subjects; [and that even the Messiah, who was to be the expectation of nations, should spring from him; and that the kingship should not be taken away from Judah, nor the ruler and law-giver of his descendants, till the expected Messiah should arrive in his family].

This same Jacob, disposing of this future land as though he had been its ruler, gave a portion to Joseph more than to the others. “I give you,” said he, “one part more than to your brothers.” And blessing his two children, Ephraim and Manasseh, whom Joseph had presented to him, the elder, Manasseh, on his right,

and the young Ephraim on his left, he put his arms crosswise, and placing his right hand on the head of Ephraim, and his left on Manasseh, he blessed them in this manner. And, upon Joseph's representing to him that he was preferring the younger, he replied to him with admirable resolution: "I know it well, my son; but Ephraim will increase more than Manasseh." This has been indeed so true in the result, that, being alone almost as fruitful as the two entire lines which composed a whole kingdom, they have been usually called by the name of Ephraim alone.

This same Joseph, when dying, bade his children carry his bones with them when they should go into that land, to which they only came two hundred years afterwards.

Moses, who wrote all these things so long before they happened, himself assigned to each family portions of that land before they entered it, as though he had been its ruler. [In fact he declared that God was to raise up from their nation and their race a prophet, of whom he was the type; and he foretold them exactly all that was to happen to them in the land which they were to enter after his death, the victories which God would give them, their ingratitude towards God, the punishments which they would receive for it, and the rest of their adventures.] He gave them judges who should make the division. He prescribed the entire form of political government which they should observe, the cities of refuge which they should build, and…

712

The prophecies about particular things are mingled with those about the Messiah, so that the prophecies of the Messiah should not be without proofs, nor the special prophecies without fruit.

713

Perpetual captivity of the Jews. — Jer. xi. II: "I will bring evil upon Judah from which they shall not be able to escape."

Types. — Is. v.: “The Lord had a vineyard, from which He looked for grapes; and it brought forth only wild grapes. I will therefore lay it waste, and destroy it; the earth shall only bring forth thorns, and I will forbid the clouds from [raining] upon it. The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah His pleasant plant. I looked that they should do justice, and they bring forth only iniquities.”

Is. viii.: “Sanctify the Lord with fear and trembling; let Him be your only dread, and He shall be to you for a sanctuary, but for a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and many among them shall stumble against that stone, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and perish. Hide my words, and cover my law for my disciples.

“I will then wait in patience upon the Lord that hideth and concealeth Himself from the house of Jacob.”

Is. xxix.: “Be amazed and wonder, people of Israel; stagger and stumble, and be drunken, but not with wine; stagger, but not with strong drink. For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep. He will close your eyes; He will cover your princes and your prophets that have visions.” (Daniel xii.: “The wicked shall not understand, but the wise shall understand.” Hosea, the last chapter, the last verse, after many temporal blessings, says: “Who is wise, and he shall understand these things, &c.?”) “And the visions of all the prophets are become unto you as a sealed book, which men deliver to one that is learned, and who can read; and he saith, I cannot read it, for it is sealed. And when the book is delivered to them that are not learned, they say, I am not learned.

“Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me,” — there is the reason and the cause of it; for if they adored God in their hearts, they would understand the prophecies,— “and their fear towards me is taught by the precept of man. Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people,

even a marvellous work and a wonder; for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and their understanding shall be [hid]."

Prophecies. Proofs of Divinity. — Is. xli.: "Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods: we will incline our heart unto your words. Teach us the things that have been at the beginning, and declare us things for to come.

"By this we shall know that ye are gods. Yea, do good or do evil, if you can. Let us then behold it and reason together. Behold, ye are of nothing, and only an abomination, &c. Who," (among contemporary writers), "hath declared from the beginning that we may know of the things done from the beginning and origin? that we may say, You are righteous. There is none that teacheth us, yea, there is none that declareth the future."

Is. xlii.: "I am the Lord, and my glory will I not give to another. I have foretold the things which have come to pass, and things that are to come do I declare. Sing unto God a new song in all the earth.

"Bring forth the blind people that have eyes and see not, and the deaf that have ears and hear not. Let all the nations be gathered together. Who among them can declare this, and shew us former things, and things to come? Let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified; or let them hear, and say, It is truth.

"Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen; that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am He.

"I have declared, and have saved, and I alone have done wonders before your eyes: ye are my witnesses, said the Lord, that I am God.

"For your sake I have brought down the forces of the Babylonians. I am the Lord, your Holy One and creator.

"I have made a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters. I am He that drowned and destroyed for ever the mighty enemies that have resisted you.

"Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old.

"Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.

“This people have I formed for myself; I have established them to shew forth my praise, &c.

“I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. Put in remembrance your ingratitude: see thou, if thou mayest be justified. Thy first father hath sinned, and thy teachers have transgressed against me.”

Is. xliv.: “I am the first, and I am the last, saith the Lord. Let him who will equal himself to me, declare the order of things since I appointed the ancient people, and the things that are coming. Fear ye not: have I not told you all these things? Ye are my witnesses.”

Prophecy of Cyrus. — Is. xlv. 4: “For Jacob’s sake, mine elect, I have called thee by thy name.”

Is. xlv. 21: “Come and let us reason together. Who hath declared this from ancient time? Who hath told it from that time? Have not I, the Lord?”

Is. xlvi.: “Remember the former things of old, and know there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.”

Is. xlii.: “Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them.”

Is. xlviii. 3: “I have declared the former things from the beginning; I did them suddenly; and they came to pass. Because I know that thou art obstinate, that thy spirit is rebellious, and thy brow brass; I have even declared it to thee before it came to pass : lest thou shouldst say that it was the work of thy gods, and the effect of their commands.

“Thou hast seen all this; and will not ye declare it? I have shewed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them. They are created now, and not from the beginning; I have kept them hidden from thee; lest thou shouldst say, Behold, I knew them.

“Yea, thou knewest not; yea, thou heardest not; yea, from that time that thine ear was not opened: for I knew that thou wouldst deal very treacherously, and

wast called a transgressor from the womb."

Reprobation of the Jews and conversion of the Gentiles. — Is. lxv.: "I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not: I said. Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that did not call upon my name.

"I have spread out my hands all the day unto an unbelieving people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts; a people that provoketh me to anger continually by the sins they commit in my face; that sacrificeth to idols, &c.

"These shall be scattered like smoke in the day of my wrath, &c.

"Your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers, will I assemble together, and will recompense you for all according to your works.

"Thus saith the Lord, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith. Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it [and the promise of fruit]: for my servants' sake I will not destroy all Israel.

"Thus I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob and out of Judah, an inheritor of my mountains, and mine elect and my servants shall inherit it, and my fertile and abundant plains; but I will destroy all others, because you have forgotten your God to serve strange gods. I called, and ye did not answer; I spake, and ye did not hear; and ye did choose the thing which I forbade.

"Therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry; my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed; my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry and howl for vexation of spirit.

"And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen: for the Lord shall slay thee, and call His servants by another name, that he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in God, &c., because the former troubles are forgotten.

"For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former things shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.

"But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.

“And I will rejoice in Jerusalem and joy in my people; and the voice of weeping shall no more be heard in her, nor the voice of crying.

“Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock; and dust shall be the serpent’s meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain.”

Is. lvi. 3: “Thus saith the Lord, keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed.

“Blessed is the man that doeth this, that keepeth the Sabbath, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.

“Neither let the strangers that have joined themselves to me, say, God will separate me from His people. For thus saith the Lord: Whoever will keep my Sabbath, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant; even unto them will I give in mine house a place and a name better than that of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.”

Is. lix. 9: “Therefore for our iniquities is justice far from us: we wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness. We grope for the wall like the blind; we stumble at noon day as in the night: we are in desolate places as dead men.

“We roar all like bears, and mourn sore like doves; we look for judgment, but there is none; for salvation, but it is far from us.”

Is. lxvi. 18: “But I know their works and their thoughts; it shall come that I will gather all nations and tongues, and they shall see my glory.

“And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Africa, to Lydia, to Italy, to Greece, and to the people that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory. And they shall bring your brethren.”

Jer. vii. *Reprobation of the Temple:* “Go ye unto Shiloth, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people. And now,

because ye have done all these works, saith the Lord, I will do unto this house, wherein my name is called upon, wherein ye trust, and unto the place which I gave to your priests, as I have done to Shiloth." (For I have rejected it, and made myself a temple elsewhere.)

"And I will cast you out of my sight, as I have cast out all your brethren, even the seed of Ephraim." (Rejected for ever.) "Therefore pray not for this people."

Jer. vii. 22: "What avails it you to add sacrifice to sacrifice? For I spake not unto your fathers, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices. But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey and be faithful to my commandments, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people." (It was only after they had sacrificed to the golden calf that I gave myself sacrifices to turn into good an evil custom.)

Jer. vii. 4: "Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, are these."

714

The Jews witnesses for God. Is. xliii. 9; xliv. 8.

Prophecies fulfilled. — 1 Kings, xiii. 2. — 1 Kings, xxiii. 16. — Jos. vi. 26. — 1 Kings, xvi. 34. — Deut. xxiii.

Malachi i. 11. The sacrifice of the Jews rejected, and the sacrifice of the heathen, (even out of Jerusalem,) and in all places.

Moses, before dying, foretold the calling of the Gentiles, Deut. xxxii. 21, and the reprobation of the Jews.

Moses foretold what would happen to each tribe.

Prophecy.— "Your name shall be a curse unto mine elect, and I will give them another name."

"Make their heart fat," and how? by flattering their lust and making them hope to satisfy it.

715

Prophecy. — Amos and Zechariah. They have sold the just one, and therefore will not be recalled. — Jesus Christ betrayed.

They shall no more remember Egypt. See Is. xliii. 16, 17, 18, 19. Jerem. xxiii. 6, 7.

Prophecy. — The Jews shall be scattered abroad. Is. xxvii. 6. — A new law, Jerem. xxxi. 32.

Malachi. Grotius. — The second temple glorious. — Jesus Christ will come. (Haggai, ii. 7, 8, 9, 10.)

The calling of the Gentiles. Joel, ii. 28. Hosea, ii. 24. Deut. xxxii. 21. Malachi, i. 11.

716

Hosea, iii. — Is. xlii., xlviii., liv., lx., lxi., last verse. "I foretold it long since that they might know that it is I." Jaddus to Alexander.

717

[*Prophecies*. — The promise that David will always have descendants. Jer. xiii. 13.]

718

The external reign of the race of David, 2 Chron., by all the prophecies, and with an oath. And it was not temporally fulfilled. Jerem. xxiii. 20.

719

We might perhaps think that, when the prophets foretold that the sceptre should not depart from Judah until the eternal King came, they spoke to flatter the people, and that their prophecy was proved false by Herod. But to show that this was not their meaning, and that, on the contrary, they knew well that this temporal

kingdom should cease, they said that they would be without a king and without a prince, and for a long time. Hosea iii. 4.

720

Non habemus regem nisi Cæsarem. Therefore Jesus Christ was the Messiah, since they had no longer any king but a stranger, and would have no other.

721

We have no king but Cæsar.

722

Daniel ii.: "All thy soothsayers and wise men cannot shew unto thee the secret which thou hast demanded. But there is a God in heaven who can do so, and that hath revealed to thee in thy dream what shall be in the latter days." (This dream must have caused him much misgiving.)

"And it is not by my own wisdom that I have knowledge of this secret, but by the revelation of this same God, that hath revealed it to me, to make it manifest in thy presence.

"Thy dream was then of this kind. Thou sawest a great image, high and terrible, which stood before thee. His head was of gold, his breast and arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thus thou sawest fill that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet, that were of iron and of clay, and brake them to pieces.

"Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold broken to pieces together, and the wind carried them away; but this stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This is the dream, and now I will give thee the interpretation thereof.

“Thou who art the greatest of kings, and to whom God hath given a power so vast that thou art renowned among all peoples, art the head of gold which thou hast seen. But after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.

“But the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron, and even as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things, so shall this empire break in pieces and bruise all.

“And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of clay and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of iron and of the weakness of clay.

“But as iron cannot be firmly mixed with clay, so they who are represented by the iron and by the clay, shall not cleave one to another though united by marriage.

“Now in the days of these kings shall God set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed, nor ever be delivered up to other people. It shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever, according as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it fell from the mountain, and brake in pieces, the iron, the clay, the silver, and the gold. God hath made known to thee what shall come to pass hereafter. This dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.

“Then Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face towards the earth,” &c.

Daniel viii. 8. “Daniel having seen the combat of the ram and of the he-goat, who vanquished him and ruled over the earth, whereof the principal horn being broken four others came up toward the four winds of heaven, and out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the land of Israel, and it waxed great even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the stars, and stamped upon them, and at last overthrew the prince, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down.

“This is what Daniel saw. He sought the meaning of it, and a voice cried in this manner, ‘Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision.’ And Gabriel said —

“The ram which thou sawest is the king of the Medes and Persians, and the he-goat is the king of Greece, and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king of this monarchy.

“Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power.

“And in the latter time of their kingdom, when iniquities are come to the full, there shall arise a king, insolent and strong, but not by his own power, to whom all things shall succeed after his own will; and he shall destroy the holy people, and through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand, and he shall destroy many. He shall also stand up against the Prince of princes, but he shall perish miserably, and nevertheless by a violent hand.”

Daniel ix. 20. “Whilst I was praying with all my heart, and confessing my sin and the sin of all my people, and prostrating myself before my God, even Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, came to me and touched me about the time of the evening oblation, and he informed me and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee the knowledge of things. At the beginning of thy supplications I came to shew that which thou didst desire, for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision. Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to abolish iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness; to accomplish the vision and the prophecies, and to anoint the Most Holy. (After which this people shall be no more thy people, nor this city the holy city. The times of wrath shall be passed, and the years of grace shall come for ever.)

“Know therefore, and understand, that, from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and three score and two weeks.” (The Hebrews were accustomed to divide numbers, and to place the small first. Thus, 7, and 62 make 69. Of this 70 there will then remain the 70th, that is to say, the 7 last years of which he will speak next.)

“The street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after three score and two weeks,” (which have followed the first seven. Christ will then be killed after the sixty-nine weeks, that is to say, in the last week), “the Christ shall be cut off, and a people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary, and overwhelm all, and the end of that war shall accomplish the desolation.”

“Now one week,” (which is the seventieth, which remains), “shall confirm the covenant with many, and in the midst of the week,” (that is to say, the last three and a half years), “he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.”

Daniel, xi. The angel said to Daniel: “There shall stand up yet,” (after Cyrus, under whom this still is), “three kings in Persia,” (Cambyses, Smyrdis, Darius); “and the fourth who shall then come,” (Xerxes)” shall be far richer than they all, and far stronger, and shall stir up all his people against the Greeks.

“But a mighty king shall stand up,” (Alexander), “that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided in four parts toward the four winds of heaven,” (as he had said above, vi, 6, viii, 8), “but not his posterity; and his successors shall not equal his power, for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others besides these,” (his four chief successors).

“And the king of the south,” (Ptolemy, son of Lagos, Egypt), ““shall be strong; but one of his princes shall be strong above him, and his dominion shall be a great dominion,” (Seleucus, King of Syria. Appian says that he was the most powerful of Alexander’s successors).

“And in the end of years they shall join themselves together, and the king’s daughter of the south,” (Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy Philadelphus, son of the other Ptolemy), “shall come to the king of the north,” (to Antiochus Deus, King of Syria and of Asia, son of Seleucus Lagidas), “to make peace between these princes.

“But neither she nor her seed shall have a long authority; for she and they that brought her, and her children, and her friends, shall be delivered to death.” (Berenice and her son were killed by Seleucus Callinicus.)

“But out of a branch of her roots shall one stand up,” (Ptolemy Euergetes was the issue of the same father as Berenice), “which shall come with a mighty army into the land of the king of the north, where he shall put all under subjection, and he shall also carry captive into Egypt their gods, their princes, their gold, their silver, and all their precious spoils,” (if he had not been called into Egypt by domestic reasons, says Justin, he would have entirely stripped Seleucus); “and he shall continue several years when the king of the north can do nought against him.

“And so he shall return into his kingdom. But his sons shall be stirred up, and shall assemble a multitude of great forces,” (Seleucus Ceraunus, Antiochus the Great). “And their army shall come and overthrow all; wherefore the king of the south shall be moved with choler, and shall also form a great army, and fight him,” (Ptolemy Philopator against Antiochus the Great at Raphia), “and conquer; and his troops shall become insolent, and his heart shall be lifted up,” (this Ptolemy desecrated the temple: Josephus): “he shall cast down many ten thousands, but he shall not be strengthened by it. For the king of the north,” (Antiochus the Great), “shall return with a greater multitude than before, and in those times also a great number of enemies shall stand up against the king of the south,” (during the reign of the young Ptolemy Epiphanes), “also the apostates and robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall fall.” (Those who abandon their religion to please Euergetes, when he will send his troops to Scopas; for Antiochus will again take Scopas, and conquer them.) “And the king of the north shall destroy the fenced cities, and the arms of the south shall not withstand, and all shall yield to his will; he shall stand in the land of Israel, and it shall yield to him. And thus he shall think to make himself master of all the empire of Egypt,” (despising the youth of Epiphanes, says Justin). “And for that he shall make alliance with him, and give his daughter” (Cleopatra, in order that she may betray her husband. On which Appian says the

doubting his ability to make himself master of Egypt by force, because of the protection of the Romans, he wished to attempt it by cunning). “He shall wish to corrupt her, but she shall not stand on his side, neither be for him. Then he shall turn his face to other designs, and shall think to make himself master of some isles,” (that is to say, seaports), “and shall take many,” (as Appian says).

“But a prince shall oppose his conquests,” (Scipio Africanus, who stopped the progress of Antiochus the Great, because he offended the Romans in the person of their allies), “and shall cause the reproach offered by him to cease. He shall then return into his kingdom and there perish, and be no more.” (He was slain by his soldiers.)

“And he who shall stand up in his estate,” (Seleucus Philopator or Soter, the son of Antiochus the Great), “shall be a tyrant, a raiser of taxes in the glory of the kingdom,” (which means the people), “but within a few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger nor in battle. And in his place shall stand up a vile person, unworthy of the honour of the kingdom, but he shall come in cleverly by flatteries. All armies shall bend before him; he shall conquer them, and even the prince with whom he has made a covenant. For having renewed the league with him, he shall work deceitfully, and enter with a small people into his province, peaceably and without fear. He shall take the fattest places, and shall do that which his fathers have not done, and ravage on all sides. He shall forecast great devices during his time.”

723

Prophecies. — The seventy weeks of Daniel are ambiguous as regards the term of commencement, because of the terms of the prophecy; and as regards the term of conclusion, because of the differences among chronologists. But all this difference extends only to two hundred years.

724

Predictions. — That in the fourth monarchy, before the destruction of the second temple, before the dominion of the Jews was taken away, in the seventieth week of Daniel, during the continuance of the second temple, the heathen should be instructed, and brought to the knowledge of the God worshipped by the Jews; that those who loved Him should be delivered from their enemies, and filled with His fear and love.

And it happened that in the fourth monarchy, before the destruction of the second temple, &c., the heathen in great number worshipped God, and led an angelic life. Maidens dedicated their virginity and their life to God. Men renounced their pleasures. What Plato could only make acceptable to a few men, specially chosen and instructed, a secret influence imparted, by the power of a few words, to a hundred million ignorant men.

The rich left their wealth. Children left the dainty homes of their parents to go into the rough desert. (See Philo the Jew.) All this was foretold a great while ago. For two thousand years no heathen had worshipped the God of the Jew; and at the time foretold, a great number of the heathen worshipped this only God. The temples were destroyed. The very kings made submission to the cross. All this was due to the Spirit of God, which was spread abroad upon the earth.

No heathen, since Moses until Jesus Christ, believed according to the very Rabbis. A great number of the heathen, after Jesus Christ, believed in the books of Moses, kept them in substance and spirit, and only rejected what was useless.

725

Prophecies. — The conversion of the Egyptians (Isaiah, xix. 19); an altar in Egypt to the true God.

726

Prophecies. — In Egypt. — Pugio Fidei, . Talmud.

“It is a tradition among us, that, when the Messiah shall come, the house of God, destined for the dispensation of His Word, shall be full of filth and impurity; and that the wisdom of the scribes shall be corrupt and rotten. Those who shall be afraid to sin, shall be rejected by the people, and treated as senseless fools.”

Is. xlix.: “Listen, O isles, unto me, and hearken, ye people, from afar: The Lord hath called me by my name from the womb of my mother; in the shadow of His hand hath He hid me, and hath made my words like a sharp sword, and said unto me. Thou art my servant in whom I will be glorified. Then I said, Lord, have I laboured in vain? have I spent my strength for nought? yet surely my judgment is with Thee, O Lord, and my work with Thee. And now, saith the Lord, that formed me from the womb to be His servant, to bring Jacob and Israel again to Him: Thou shalt be glorious in my sight, and I will be thy strength. It is a light thing that thou shouldst convert the tribes of Jacob; I have raised thee up for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the ends of the earth. Thus saith the Lord to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers. Princes and kings shall worship thee, because the Lord is faithful that hath chosen thee.

“Again saith the Lord unto me, I have heard thee in the days of salvation and of mercy, and I will preserve thee for a covenant of the people, to cause to inherit the desolate nations, that thou mayest say to the prisoners: Go forth; to them that are in darkness show yourselves, and possess these abundant and fertile lands. They shall not hunger nor thirst, neither shall the heat nor sun smite them; for he that hath mercy upon them shall lead them, even by the springs of waters shall he guide them, and make the mountains a way before them. Behold, the peoples shall come from all parts, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south. Let the heavens give glory to God; let the earth be joyful; for it hath pleased the Lord to comfort His people, and He will have mercy upon the poor who hope in Him.

“Yet Sion dared to say: The Lord hath forsaken me, and hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her

womb? but if she forget, yet will not I forget thee, O Sion. I will bear thee always between my hands, and thy walls are continually before me. They that shall build thee are come, and thy destroyers shall go forth of thee. Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold; all these gather themselves together, and come to thee. As I live, saith the Lord, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, as with an ornament, thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction, shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants, and the children thou shalt have after thy barrenness shall say again in thy ears: The place is too strait for me: give place to me that I may dwell. Then shalt thou say in thy heart: who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? and who brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; there, where had they been? And the Lord shall say to thee: Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people; and they shall bring thy sons in their arms and in their bosoms. And kings shall be their nursing fathers, and queens their nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord; for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me. Shall the prey be taken from the mighty? But even if the captives be taken away from the strong, nothing shall hinder me from saving thy children, and from destroying thy enemies; and all flesh shall know that I am the Lord, thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.

"Thus saith the Lord: What is the bill of this divorcement, wherewith I have put away the synagogue? and why have I delivered it into the hands of your enemies? Is it not for your iniquities and for your transgressions that I have put it away?

"For I came, and no man received me; I called, and there was none to hear. Is my arm shortened that I cannot redeem?

"Therefore I will show the tokens of mine anger; I will clothe the heavens with darkness, and make sack cloth their covering.

“The Lord hath given me the tongue of the learned that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary. He hath opened mine ear, and I have listened to Him as a master.

“The Lord hath revealed His will, and I was not rebellious.

“I gave my body to the smiters, and my cheeks to outrage; I hid not my face from shame and spitting. But the Lord hath helped me; therefore I have not been confounded.

“He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? who will be mine adversary, and accuse me of sin, God himself being my protector?

“All men shall pass away, and be consumed by time; let those that fear God hearken to the voice of His servant; let him that languisheth in darkness put his trust in the Lord. But as for you, ye do but kindle the wrath of God upon you; ye walk in the light of your fire and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow.

“Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham, your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, when childless, and increased him. Behold, I have comforted Zion, and heaped upon her blessings and consolations.

“Hearken unto me, my people, and give ear unto me; for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the Gentiles.”

Amos, viii. The prophet, having enumerated the sins of Israel, said that God had sworn to take vengeance on them.

He says this: “And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day; and I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation.

“You all shall have sorrow and suffering, and I will make this nation mourn as for an only son, and the end therefore as a bitter day. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. And they shall wander from sea to

sea, and from the north even to the east; they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it.

"In that day shall the fair virgins and young men faint for thirst. They that have followed the idols of Samaria, and sworn by the god of Dan, and followed the manner of Beersheba, shall fall, and never rise up again."

Amos, iii. 2: "Ye only have I known of all the families of the earth for my people."

Daniel, xii. 7. Having described all the extent of the reign of the Messiah, he says: "All these things shall be finished, when the scattering of the people of Israel shall be accomplished."

Haggai, ii. 4: "Ye who, comparing this second house with the glory of the first, despise it, be strong, saith the Lord, be strong, O Zerubbabel, and O Jesus, the high priest, be strong, all ye people of the land, and work. For I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts; according to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you. Fear ye not. For thus saith the Lord of hosts: Yet one little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land," (a way of speaking to indicate a great and an extraordinary change); "and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all the Gentiles shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord.

"The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord," (that is to say, it is not by that that I wish to be honoured; as it is said elsewhere. All the beasts of the field are mine, what advantages me that they are offered me in sacrifice?). "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts; and in this place will I establish my house, saith the Lord.

"According to all that thou desiredst in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let us not hear again the voice of the Lord, neither let us see this fire any more, that we die not. And the Lord said unto me, Their prayer is just. I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.

And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he will speak in my name, I will require it of him."

Genesis, xlix. "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise, and thou shalt conquer thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up, and art couched as a lion, and as a lioness that shall be roused up.

"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."

727

During the life of the Messiah. — Ænigmatis. — Ezek. xvii.

His forerunner. Malachi, iii.

He will be born an infant. Is. ix.

He will be born in the village of Bethlehem. Micah, v. He will appear chiefly in Jerusalem, and will be a descendant of the family of Judah and of David.

He is to blind the learned and the wise. Is. vi., viii., xxix., &c.; and to preach the Gospel to the lowly. Is. xxix.; to open the eyes of the blind, give health to the sick, and bring light to those that languish in darkness. Is. lxi.

He is to show the perfect way, and be the teacher of the Gentiles. Is. lv.; xlii. 1 — 7.

The prophecies are to be unintelligible to the wicked, Dan. xii.; Hosea, xiv. 10; but they are to be intelligible to those who are well informed.

The prophecies, which represent Him as poor, represent Him as master of the nations. Is. lii. 14, &c.; liii.; Zech. ix. 9.

The prophecies, which foretell the time, foretell Him only as master of the nations and suffering, and not as in the clouds nor as judge. And those, which represent Him thus as judge and in glory, do not mention the time. When the Messiah is spoken of as great and glorious, it is as the judge of the world, and not its Redeemer.

He is to be the victim for the sins of the world. Is. xxxix., liii., &c.

He is to be the precious corner-stone. Is. xxviii., 16.

He is to be a stone of stumbling and offence. Is. viii. Jerusalem is to dash against this stone.

The builders are to reject this stone. Ps. cxvii. 22.

God is to make this stone the chief corner-stone.

And this stone is to grow into a huge mountain, and fill the whole earth. Dan. ii.

So He is to be rejected, despised, betrayed, (Ps. cviii. 8), sold (Zech. xi. 12), spit upon, buffeted, mocked, afflicted in innumerable ways, given gall to drink (Ps. lxviii.), pierced (Zech. xii.), His feet and His hands pierced, slain, and lots cast for His raiment.

He will rise again (Ps. xv.) the third day (Hosea, vi. 3).

He will ascend to heaven to sit on the right hand. Ps. cx.

The kings will arm themselves against Him. Ps. ii.

Being on the right hand of the Father, He will be victorious over His enemies.

The kings of the earth and all nations will worship Him. Is. lx.

The Jews will continue as a nation. Jeremiah.

They will wander, without kings, &c. (Hosea iii.), without prophets (Amos), looking for salvation and finding it not (Isaiah).

Calling of the Gentiles by Jesus Christ. Is lii. 15; lv. 5; lx., &c. Ps. lxxxi.

Hosea, i. 9: “Ye are not my people, and I will not be your God, when ye are multiplied after the dispersion. In the places where it was said, Ye are not my people, I will call them my people.”

728

It was not lawful to sacrifice outside of Jerusalem, which was the place that the Lord has chosen, nor even to eat the tithes elsewhere. Deut. xii. 5, &c.; Deut. xiv. 23, &c.; xv. 20; xvi. 2, 7, 11, 15.

Hosea foretold that they should be without a king, without a prince, without a sacrifice, and without an idol; and this prophecy is now fulfilled, as they cannot make a lawful sacrifice out of Jerusalem.

729

Predictions. — It was foretold that, in the time of the Messiah, He should come to establish a new covenant, which should make them forget the escape from Egypt (Jer. xxiii. 5; Is. xliii. 16) that He should place His law not in externals, but in the heart; that He should put His fear, which had only been from without, in the midst of the heart. Who does not see the Christian law in all this?

730

…That then idolatry would be overthrown; that this Messiah would cast down all idols, and bring men into the worship of the true God.

That the temples of the idols would be cast down, and that among all nations, and in all places of the earth, He would be offered a pure sacrifice, not of beasts.

That He would be king of the Jews and Gentiles. And we see this king of the Jews and Gentiles oppressed by both, who conspire His death; and ruler of both, destroying the worship of Moses in Jerusalem, which was its centre, where He made His first Church; and also the worship of idols in Rome, the centre of it, where He made His chief Church.

731

Prophecies. — That Jesus Christ will sit on the right hand, till God has subdued His enemies.

Therefore He will not subdue them Himself.

732

"…Then they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, saying, Here is the Lord, *for God shall make Himself known to all.*"

"…Your sons shall prophesy." "I will put my spirit and my fear *in your heart*."

All that is the same thing. To prophesy is to speak of God, not from outward proofs, but from an inward and immediate feeling.

733

That He would teach men the perfect way.

And there has never come, before Him nor after Him, any man who has taught anything divine approaching to this.

734

…That Jesus Christ would be small in His beginning, and would then increase. The little stone of Daniel.

If I had in no wise heard of the Messiah, nevertheless, after such wonderful predictions of the course of the world which I see fulfilled, I see that He is divine. And if I knew that these same books foretold a Messiah, I should be sure that He would come; and seeing that they place His time before the destruction of the second temple, I should say that He had come.

735

Prophecies. — That the Jews would reject Jesus Christ, and would be rejected of God, for this reason, that the chosen vine brought forth only wild grapes. That the chosen people would be faithless, ungrateful, and unbelieving, *populum non credentem et contradicentem.* That God would strike them with blindness, and in full noon they would grope like the blind; and that a forerunner would go before Him.

736

Transfixerunt. Zech. xii. 10.

That a deliverer should come, who would crush the demon's head, and free His people from their sins, *ex omnibus iniquitatibus*; that there should be a New Covenant, which would be eternal; that there should be another priesthood after the order of Melchisedek, and it should be eternal; that the Christ should be glorious, mighty, strong, and yet so poor that He would not be recognised, nor taken for what He is, but rejected and slain; that His people who denied Him should no longer be His people; that the idolaters should receive Him, and take refuge in Him; that He should leave Zion to reign in the centre of idolatry; that nevertheless the Jews should continue for ever; that He should be of Judah, and when there should be no longer a king.

SECTION XII. Proofs of Jesus Christ

737



THEREFORE I REJECT all other religions. In that way I find an answer to all objections. It is right that a God so pure should only reveal Himself to those whose hearts are purified. Hence this religion is lovable to me, and I find it now sufficiently justified by so divine a morality. But I find more in it.

I find it convincing that, since the memory of man has lasted, it was constantly announced to men that they were universally corrupt, but that a Redeemer should come; that it was not one man who said it, but innumerable men, and a whole nation, expressly made for the purpose, and prophesying for four thousand years. This is a nation which is more ancient than every other nation. Their books, scattered abroad, are four thousand years old.

The more I examine them, the more truths I find in them: an entire nation foretell Him before His advent, and an entire nation worship Him after His advent; what has preceded and what has followed; in short, people without idols and kings, this synagogue which was foretold, and these wretches who frequent it, and who, being our enemies, are admirable witnesses of the truth of these prophecies, wherein their wretchedness and even their blindness are foretold.

I find this succession, this religion, wholly divine in its authority, in its duration, in its perpetuity, in its morality, in its conduct, in its doctrine, in its effects. The frightful darkness of the Jews was foretold. *Eris palpans in meridie. Dabitur liber scienti literas, et dicet: Non possum legere.* While the sceptre was still in the hands of the first foreign usurper, there is the report of the coming of Jesus Christ.

So I hold out my arms to my *Redeemer*, who, having been foretold for four thousand years, has come to suffer and to die for me on earth, at the time and under all the circumstances foretold. By His grace, I await death in peace, in the hope of being eternally united to Him. Yet I live with joy, whether in the prosperity which it pleases Him to bestow upon me, or in the adversity which He sends for my good, and which He has taught me to bear by His example.

738

The prophecies having given different signs which should all happen at the advent of the Messiah, it was necessary that all these signs should occur at the same time. So it was necessary that the fourth monarchy should have come, when the seventy weeks of Daniel were ended; and that the sceptre should have then departed from Judah. And all this happened without any difficulty. Then it was necessary that the Messiah should come; and Jesus Christ then came, who was called the Messiah. And all this again was without difficulty. This indeed shows the truth of the prophecies.

739

The prophets foretold, and were not foretold. The saints again were foretold, but did not foretell. Jesus Christ both foretold and was foretold.

740

Jesus Christ, whom the two Testaments regard, the Old as its hope, the New as its model, and both as their centre.

741

The two oldest books in the world are those of Moses and Job, the one a Jew and the other a Gentile. Both of them look upon Jesus Christ as their common centre

and object: Moses in relating the promises of God to Abraham, Jacob, &c., and his prophecies; and Job, *Quis mihi det ut*, &c. *Scio enim quod redemptor meus vivit*, &c.

742

The Gospel only speaks of the virginity of the Virgin up to the time of the birth of Jesus Christ. All with reference to Jesus Christ.

743

Proofs of Jesus Christ.

Why was the book of Ruth preserved?

Why the story of Tamar?

744

"Pray that ye enter not into temptation." It is dangerous to be tempted; and people are tempted because they do not pray.

Et tu conversus confirma fratres tuos. But before, *conversus Jesus respexit Petrum.*

Saint Peter asks permission to strike Malchus, and strikes before hearing the answer. Jesus Christ replies afterwards.

The word, *Galilee*, which the Jewish mob pronounced as if by chance, in accusing Jesus Christ before Pilate, afforded Pilate a reason for sending Jesus Christ to Herod. And thereby the mystery was accomplished, that He should be judged by Jews and Gentiles. Chance was apparently the cause of the accomplishment of the mystery.

745

Those who have a difficulty in believing seek a reason in the fact that the Jews do not believe. “Were this so clear,” say they, “why did the Jews not believe?” And they almost wish that they had believed, so as not to be kept back by the example of their refusal. But it is their very refusal that is the foundation of our faith. We should be much less disposed to the faith, if they were on our side. We should then have a more ample pretext. The wonderful thing is to have made the Jews great lovers of the things foretold, and great enemies of their fulfilment.

746

The Jews were accustomed to great and striking miracles, and so, having had the great miracles of the Red Sea and of the land of Canaan as an epitome of the great deeds of their Messiah, they therefore looked for more striking miracles, of which those of Moses were only the patterns.

747

The carnal Jews and the heathen have their calamities, and Christians also. There is no Redeemer for the heathen, for they do not so much as hope for one. There is no Redeemer for the Jews; they hope for Him in vain. There is a Redeemer only for Christians. (*See* Perpetuity.)

748

In the time of the Messiah the people divided themselves. The spiritual embraced the Messiah, and the coarser-minded remained to serve as witnesses of Him.

749

“If this was clearly foretold to the Jews, how did they not believe it, or why were they not destroyed for resisting a fact so clear?”

I reply: in the first place, it was foretold both that they would not believe a thing so clear, and that they would not be destroyed. And nothing is more to the glory of the Messiah; for it was not enough that there should be prophets; their prophets must be kept above suspicion. Now, &c.

750

If the Jews had all been converted by Jesus Christ, we should have none but questionable witnesses. And if they had been entirely destroyed, we should have no witnesses at all.

751

What do the prophets say of Jesus Christ? That He will be clearly God? No; but that He is a God truly hidden; that He will be slighted; that none will think that it is He; that He will be a stone of stumbling, upon which many will stumble, &c. Let people then reproach us no longer for want of clearness, since we make profession of it.

But, it is said, there are obscurities. — And without that, no one would have stumbled over Jesus Christ, and this is one of the formal pronouncements of the prophets: *Excæca.*

752

Moses first teaches the Trinity, original sin, the Messiah.

David: a great witness; a king, good, merciful, a beautiful soul, a sound mind, powerful. He prophesies, and his wonder comes to pass. This is infinite.

He had only to say that he was the Messiah, if he had been vain; for the prophecies are clearer about him than about Jesus Christ. And the same with Saint John.

753

Herod was believed to be the Messiah. He had taken away the sceptre from Judah, but he was not of Judah. This gave rise to a considerable sect.

Curse of the Greeks upon those who count three periods of time.

In what way should the Messiah come, seeing that through Him the sceptre was to be eternally in Judah, and at His coming the sceptre was to be taken away from Judah?

In order to effect that seeing they should not see, and hearing they should not understand, nothing could be better done.

754

Homo existens te Deum facit.

Scriptum est, Dii estis, et non potest solvi Scriptura.

Hæc infirmitas non est ad vitam et est ad mortem.

Lazarus dormit, et deinde dixit: Lazarus mortuus est.

755

The apparent discrepancy of the Gospels.

756

What can we have but reverence for a man who foretells plainly things which come to pass, and who declares his intention both to blind and to enlighten, and who intersperses obscurities among the clear things which come to pass?

757

The time of the first advent was foretold; the time of the second is not so; because the first was to be obscure, and the second is to be brilliant, and so manifest that even His enemies will recognise it. But, as He was first to come only in obscurity, and to be known only of those who searched the Scriptures.…

758

God, in order to cause the Messiah to be known by the good and not to be known by the wicked, made Him to be foretold in this manner. If the manner of the Messiah had been clearly foretold, there would have been no obscurity, even for the wicked. If the time had been obscurely foretold, there would have been obscurity, even for the good. For their [goodness of heart] would not have made them understand, for instance, that the closed *mem* signifies six hundred years. But the time has been clearly foretold, and the manner in types.

By this means, the wicked, taking the promised blessings for material blessings, have fallen into error, in spite of the clear prediction of the time; and the good have not fallen into error. For the understanding of the promised blessings depends on the heart, which calls "good" that which it loves; but the understanding of the promised time does not depend on the heart. And thus the clear prediction of the time, and the obscure prediction of the blessings, deceive the wicked alone.

759

Either the Jews or the Christians must be wicked.

760

The Jews reject Him, but not all. The saints receive Him, and not the carnal-minded. And so far is this from being against His glory, that it is the last touch which crowns it. For their argument, the only one found in all their writings, in the Talmud and in the Rabbinical writings, amounts only to this, that Jesus Christ has not subdued the nations with sword in hand, *gladium tuum, potentissime.* Is this all they have to say? Jesus Christ has been slain, say they. He has failed. He has not subdued the heathen with His might. He has not bestowed upon us their spoil. He does not give riches. Is this all they have to say? It is in this respect that

He is lovable to me. I would not desire Him whom they fancy. It is evident that it is only His life which has prevented them from accepting Him; and through this rejection they are irreproachable witnesses, and, what is more, they thereby accomplish the prophecies.

[By means of the fact that this people have not accepted Him, this miracle here has happened. The prophecies were the only lasting miracles which could be wrought, but they were liable to be denied.]

761

The Jews, in slaying Him in order not to receive Him as the Messiah, have given Him the final proof of being the Messiah.

And in continuing not to recognise Him, they made themselves irreproachable witnesses. Both in slaying Him, and in continuing to deny Him, they have fulfilled the prophecies (Isa. lx.; Ps. lxxi.).

762

What could the Jews, His enemies, do? If they receive Him, they give proof of Him by their reception; for then the guardians of the expectation of the Messiah receive Him. If they reject Him, they give proof of Him by their rejection.

763

The Jews, in testing if He were God, have shown that He was man.

764

The Church has had as much difficulty in showing that Jesus Christ was man, against those who denied it, as in showing that he was God; and the probabilities were equally great.

765

Source of contradictions. — A God humiliated, even to the death on the cross; a Messiah triumphing over death by his own death. Two natures in Jesus Christ, two advents, two states of man's nature.

766

Types. — Saviour, father, sacrificer, offering, food, king, wise, law-giver, afflicted, poor, having to create a people whom He must lead and nourish and bring into His land…

Jesus Christ. Offices. — He alone had to create a great people, elect, holy, and chosen; to lead, nourish, and bring it into the place of rest and holiness; to make it holy to God; to make it the temple of God; to reconcile it to, and save it from the wrath of God; to free it from the slavery of sin, which visibly reigns in man; to give laws to this people, and engrave these laws on their heart; to offer Himself to God for them, and sacrifice Himself for them; to be a victim without blemish, and Himself the sacrificer, having to offer Himself, His body, and His blood, and yet to offer bread and wine to God…

Ingrediens mundum.

"Stone upon stone."

What preceded and what followed. All the Jews exist still, and are wanderers.

767

Of all that is on earth, He partakes only of the sorrows, not of the joys. He loves His neighbours, but His love does not confine itself within these bounds, and overflows to His own enemies, and then to those of God.

768

Jesus Christ typified by Joseph, the beloved of his father, sent by his father to see his brethren, &c., innocent, sold by his brethren for twenty pieces of silver, and thereby becoming their lord, their saviour, the saviour of strangers, and the

saviour of the world; which had not been but for their plot to destroy him, their sale and their rejection of him.

In prison Joseph innocent between two criminals; Jesus Christ on the cross between two thieves. Joseph foretells freedom to the one, and death to the other, from the same omens. Jesus Christ saves the elect, and condemns the outcast for the same sins. Joseph foretells only; Jesus Christ acts. Joseph asks him who will be saved to remember him, when he comes into his glory; and he whom Jesus Christ saves asks that He will remember him, when He comes into His kingdom.

769

The conversion of the heathen was only reserved for the grace of the Messiah. The Jews have been so long in opposition to them without success; all that Solomon and the prophets said has been useless. Sages, like Plato and Socrates, have not been able to persuade them.

770

After many persons had gone before, Jesus Christ at last came to say: " Here am I, and this is the time. That which the prophets have said was to come in the fulness of time, I tell you My apostles will do. The Jews shall be cast out. Jerusalem shall be soon destroyed. And the heathen shall enter into the knowledge of God. My apostles shall do this after you have slain the heir of the vineyard."

Then the apostles said to the Jews: "You shall be accursed," (*Celsus laughed at it*); and to the heathen, "You shall enter into the knowledge of God." And this then came to pass.

771

Jesus Christ came to blind those who saw clearly, and to give sight to the blind; to heal the sick, and leave the healthy to die; to call to repentance, and to justify

sinners, and to leave the righteous in their sins; to fill the needy, and leave the rich empty.

772

Holiness. — Effundum spiritum meum. All nations were in unbelief and lust. The whole world now became fervent with love. Princes abandoned their pomp; maidens suffered martyrdom. Whence came this influence? The Messiah was come. These were the effect and signs of His coming.

773

Destruction of the Jews and heathen by Jesus Christ: *Omnes gentes venient et adorabunt eum. Parum est ut*, &c. *Postula a me*. *Adorabunt eum omnes reges*. *Testes iniqui*. *Dabit maxillam percutienti*. *Dederunt fel in escam*.

774

Jesus Christ for all, Moses for a nation.

The Jews blessed in Abraham: "I will bless those that bless thee." But: "All nations blessed in his seed." *Parum est ut*, &c.

Lumen ad revelationem gentium.

Non fecit taliter omni nationi, said David, in speaking of the Law. But, in speaking of Jesus Christ, we must say: *Fecit taliter omni nationi. Parum est ut,* &c., Isaiah. So it belongs to Jesus Christ to be universal. Even the Church offers sacrifice only for the faithful. Jesus Christ offered that of the cross for all.

775

There is heresy in always explaining *omnes* by "all," and heresy in not explaining it sometimes by "all." *Bibite ex hoc omnes;* the Huguenots are heretics in explaining it by "all." *In quo omnes peccaverunt;* the Huguenots are heretics in

excepting the children of true believers. We must then follow the Fathers and tradition in order to know when to do so, since there is heresy to be feared on both sides.

776

Ne timeas pusillus grex. Timore et tremore. — Quid ergo? Ne timeas [modo] *timeas*. Fear not, provided you fear; but if you fear not, then fear.

Qui me recipit, non me recipit, sed eum qui me misit.

Nemo scit, neque Filius.

Nubes lucida obumbravit.

Saint John was to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and Jesus Christ to plant division. There is no contradiction.

777

The effects *in communi* and *in particulari.* The semi-Pelagians err in saying of *in communi* what is true only *in particulari*; and the Calvinists in saying *in particulari* what is true *in communi*. Such is my opinion.

778

Omnis Judæa regio, et Jerosolomytæ universi, et baptizabantur. Because of all the conditions of men who came there.

From these stones there can come children unto Abraham.

779

If men knew themselves, God would heal and pardon them. *Ne convertantur et sanem eos, et dimittantur eis peccata.*

780

Jesus Christ never condemned without hearing. To Judas: *Amice, ad quid venisti?* To him that had not on the wedding garment, the same.

781

The types of the completeness of the Redemption, as that the sun gives light to all, indicate only completeness; but [*the types*] of exclusions, as of the Jews elected to the exclusion of the Gentiles, indicate exclusion.

"Jesus Christ the Redeemer of all." — Yes, for He has offered, like a man who has ransomed all those who were willing to come to Him. If any die on the way, it is their misfortune; but, so far as He was concerned. He offered them redemption. — That holds good in this example, where he who ransoms and he who prevents death are two persons, but not of Jesus Christ, who does both these things. — No, for Jesus Christ, in the quality of Redeemer, is not perhaps Master of all; and thus, in so far as it is in Him, He is the Redeemer of all.

When it is said that Jesus Christ did not die for all, you take undue advantage of a fault in men who at once apply this exception to themselves; and this is to favour despair, instead of turning them from it to favour hope. For men thus accustom themselves to inward virtues by outward customs.

782

The victory over death. What is a man advantaged if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Whosoever will save his soul, shall lose it.

"I am not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil."

"Lambs took not away the sins of the world, but I am the lamb which taketh away the sins."

"Moses gave you not the bread from heaven. Moses hath not led you out of captivity, and made you truly free."

783

…Then Jesus Christ comes to tell men that they have no other enemies but themselves; that it is their passions which keep them apart from God; that He comes to destroy these, and give them His grace, so as to make of them all one Holy Church; that He comes to bring back into this Church the heathen and Jews; that He comes to destroy the idols of the former and the superstition of the latter.

To this all men are opposed, not only from the natural opposition of lust; but, above all, the kings of the earth, as had been foretold, join together to destroy this religion at its birth. (*Proph.: Quare fermerunt gentes…reges terræ…adversus Christum*.)

All that is great on earth is united together; the learned, the wise, the kings. The first write; the second condemn; the last kill. And notwithstanding all these oppositions, these men, simple and weak, resist all these powers, subdue even these kings, these learned men and these sages, and remove idolatry from all the earth. And all this is done by the power which had foretold it.

784

Jesus Christ would not have the testimony of devils, nor of those who were not called, but of God and John the Baptist.

785

I consider Jesus Christ in all persons and in ourselves: Jesus Christ as a Father in His Father, Jesus Christ as a Brother in His Brethren, Jesus Christ as poor in the poor, Jesus Christ as rich in the rich, Jesus Christ as Doctor and Priest in priests, Jesus Christ as Sovereign in princes, &c. For by His glory He is all that is great, being God; and by His mortal life He is all that is poor and abject. Therefore He has taken this unhappy condition, so that He could be in all persons, and the model of all conditions.

786

Jesus Christ is an obscurity (according to what the world calls obscurity), such that historians, writing only of important matters of states, have hardly noticed Him.

787

On the fact that neither Josephus, nor Tacitus, nor other historians have spoken of Jesus Christ. — So far is this from telling against Christianity, that on the contrary it tells for it. For it is certain that Jesus Christ has existed; that His religion has made a great talk; and that these persons were not ignorant of it. Thus it is plain that they purposely concealed it, or that, if they did speak of it, their account has been suppressed or changed.

788

"I have reserved me seven thousand." I love the worshippers unknown to the world and to the very prophets.

789

As Jesus Christ remained unknown among men, so His truth remains among common opinions without external difference. Thus the Eucharist among ordinary bread.

790

Jesus would not be slain without the forms of justice; for it is far more ignominious to die by justice than by an unjust sedition.

791

The false justice of Pilate only serves to make Jesus Christ suffer; for he causes Him to be scourged by his false justice, and afterwards puts Him to death. It

would have been better to have put Him to death at once. Thus it is with the falsely just. They do good and evil works to please the world, and to show that they are not altogether of Jesus Christ; for they are ashamed of Him. And at last, under great temptations and on great occasions, they kill Him.

792

What man ever had more renown? The whole Jewish people foretell Him before His coming. The Gentile people worship Him after His coming. The two peoples. Gentile and Jewish, regard Him as their centre.

And yet what man enjoys this renown less? Of thirty-three years, He lives thirty without appearing. For three years He passes as an impostor; the priests and the chief people reject Him; His friends and His nearest relatives despise Him. Finally, He dies, betrayed by one of His own disciples, denied by another, and abandoned by all.

What part, then, has He in this renown? Never had man so much renown; never had man more ignominy. All that renown has served only for us, to render us capable of recognising Him; and He had none of it for Himself.

793

The infinite distance between body and mind is a symbol of the infinitely more infinite distance between mind and charity; for charity is supernatural.

All the glory of greatness has no lustre for people who are in search of understanding.

The greatness of clever men is invisible to kings, to the rich, to chiefs, and to all the worldly great.

The greatness of wisdom, which is nothing if not of God, is invisible to the carnal-minded and to the clever. These are three orders differing in kind.

Great geniuses have their power, their glory, their greatness, their victory, their lustre, and have no need of worldly greatness, with which they are not in keeping.

They are seen, not by the eye, but by the mind; this is sufficient.

The saints have their power, their glory, their victory, their lustre, and need no worldly or intellectual greatness, with which they have no affinity; for these neither add anything to them, nor take away anything from them. They are seen of God and the angels, and not of the body, nor of the curious mind. God is enough for them.

Archimedes, apart from his rank, would have the same veneration. He fought no battles for the eyes to feast upon; but he has given his discoveries to all men. Oh! how brilliant he was to the mind!

Jesus Christ, without riches, and without any external exhibition of knowledge, is in His own order of holiness. He did not invent; He did not reign. But He was humble, patient, holy, holy to God, terrible to devils, without any sin. Oh! in what great pomp, and in what wonderful splendour. He is come to the eyes of the heart, which perceive wisdom!

It would have been useless for Archimedes to have acted the prince in his books on geometry, although he was a prince.

It would have been useless for our Lord Jesus Christ to come like a king, in order to shine forth in His kingdom of holiness. But He came there appropriately in the glory of His own order.

It is most absurd to take offence at the lowliness of Jesus Christ, as if His lowliness were in the same order as the greatness which He came to manifest. If we consider this greatness in His life, in His passion, in His obscurity, in His death, in the choice of His disciples, in their desertion, in His secret resurrection, and the rest, we shall see it to be so immense, that we shall have no reason for being offended at a lowliness which is not of that order.

But there are some who can only admire worldly greatness, as though there were no intellectual greatness; and others who only admire intellectual greatness, as though there were not infinitely higher things in wisdom.

All bodies, the firmament, the stars, the earth and its kingdoms, are not equal to the lowest mind; for mind knows all these and itself; and these bodies nothing.

All bodies together, and all minds together, and all their products, are not equal to the least feeling of charity. This is of an order infinitely more exalted.

From all bodies together, we cannot obtain one little thought; this is impossible, and of another order. From all bodies and minds, we cannot produce a feeling of true charity; this is impossible, and of another and supernatural order.

794

Why did Jesus Christ not come in a visible manner, instead of obtaining testimony of Himself from preceding prophecies? Why did He cause Himself to be foretold in types?

795

If Jesus Christ had only come to sanctify, all Scripture and all things would tend to that end; and it would be quite easy to convince unbelievers. If Jesus Christ had only come to blind, all His conduct would be confused; and we would have no means of convincing unbelievers. But as he came *in sanctificationem et in scandalum*, as Isaiah says, we cannot convince unbelievers, and they cannot convince us. But by this very fact we convince them; since we say that in his whole conduct there is no convincing proof on one side or the other.

796

Jesus Christ does not say that He is not of Nazareth, in order to leave the wicked in their blindness; nor that He is not Joseph's son.

797

Proofs of Jesus Christ. — Jesus Christ said great things so simply, that it seems as though He had not thought them great; and yet so clearly that we easily see what He thought of them. This clearness, joined to this simplicity, is wonderful.

798

The style of the gospel is admirable in so many ways, and among the rest in hurling no invectives against the persecutors and enemies of Jesus Christ. For there is no such invective in any of the historians against Judas, Pilate, or any of the Jews.

If this moderation of the writers of the Gospels had been assumed, as well as many other traits of so beautiful a character, and they had only assumed it to attract notice, even if they had not dared to draw attention to it themselves, they would not have failed to secure friends, who would have made such remarks to their advantage. But as they acted thus without pretence, and from wholly disinterested motives, they did not point it out to any one; and I believe that many such facts have not been noticed till now, which is evidence of the natural disinterestedness with which the thing has been done.

799

An artisan who speaks of wealth, a lawyer who speaks of war, of royalty, &c.; but the rich man rightly speaks of wealth, a king speaks indifferently of a great gift he has just made, and God rightly speaks of God.

800

Who has taught the evangelists the qualities of a perfectly heroic soul, that they paint it so perfectly in Jesus Christ? Why do they make Him weak in His agony? Do they not know how to paint a resolute death? Yes, for the same Saint Luke paints the death of Saint Stephen as braver than that of Jesus Christ.

They make Him therefore capable of fear, before the necessity of dying has come, and then altogether brave.

But when they make Him so troubled, it is when He afflicts Himself; and when men afflict Him, He is altogether strong.

801

Proof of Jesus Christ. — The supposition that the apostles were impostors is very absurd. Let us think it out. Let us imagine those twelve men, assembled after the death of Jesus Christ, plotting to say that He was risen. By this they attack all the powers. The heart of man is strangely inclined to fickleness, to change, to promises, to gain. However little any of them might have been led astray by all these attractions, nay more, by the fear of prisons, tortures, and death, they were lost. Let us follow up this thought.

802

The apostles were either deceived or deceivers. Either supposition has difficulties; for it is not possible to mistake a man raised from the dead…

While Jesus Christ was with them, He could sustain them. But, after that, if He did not appear to them, who inspired them to act?

SECTION XIII. The Miracles

803



THE BEGINNING. — Miracles enable us to judge of doctrine, and doctrine enables us to judge of miracles.

There are false miracles and true. There must be a distinction, in order to know them; otherwise they would be useless. Now they are not useless; on the contrary, they are fundamental. Now the rule which is given to us must be such, that it does not destroy the proof which the true miracles give of the truth, which is the chief end of the miracles.

Moses has given two rules: that the prediction does not come to pass (Deut. xviii.), and that they do not lead to idolatry (Deut. xiii.); and Jesus Christ one.

If doctrine regulates miracles, miracles are useless for doctrine.

If miracles regulate…

Objection to the rule. — The distinction of the times. One rule during the time of Moses, another at present.

804

Miracle. — It is an effect, which exceeds the natural power of the means which are employed for it; and what is not a miracle is an effect, which does not exceed the natural power of the means which are employed for it. Thus, those who heal by invocation of the devil do not work a miracle; for that does not exceed the natural power of the devil. But…

805

The two fundamentals; one inward, the other outward; grace and miracles; both supernatural.

806

Miracles and truth are necessary, because it is necessary to convince the entire man, in body and soul.

807

In all times, either men have spoken of the true God, or the true God has spoken to men.

808

Jesus Christ has verified that He was the Messiah, never in verifying His doctrine by Scripture and the prophecies, but always by His miracles.

He proves by a miracle that He remits sins.

Rejoice not in your miracles, said Jesus Christ, but because your names are written in heaven.

If they believe not Moses, neither will they believe one risen from the dead.

Nicodemus recognises by His miracles that His teaching is of God. *Scimus quia venisti a Deo magister; nemo enim potest hæc signa facere quæ tu facis nisi Deus fuerit cum eo.* He does not judge of the miracles by the teaching, but of the teaching by the miracles.

The Jews had a doctrine of God as we have one of Jesus Christ, and confirmed by miracles. They were forbidden to believe every worker of miracles; and they were further commanded to have recourse to the chief priests, and to rely on them.

And thus, in regard to their prophets, they had all those reasons which we have for refusing to believe the workers of miracles.

And yet they were very sinful in rejecting the prophets, and Jesus Christ, because of their miracles; and they would not have been culpable, if they had not seen the miracles. *Nisi fecissem…peccatum non haberent.* Therefore all belief rests upon miracles.

Prophecy is not called miracle; as Saint John speaks of the first miracle in Cana, and then of what Jesus Christ says to the woman of Samaria, when He reveals to her all her hidden life. Then He heals the centurion's son; and Saint John calls this "the second miracle."

809

The combinations of miracles.

810

The second miracle can suppose the first, but the first cannot suppose the second.

811

Had it not been for the miracles, there would have been no sin in not believing in Jesus Christ.

812

I should not be a Christian, but for the miracles, said Saint Augustine.

813

Miracles. — How I hate those who make men doubt of miracles! Montaigne speaks of them as he should in two places. In one, we see how careful he is; and yet, in the other he believes, and makes sport of unbelievers.

However it may be, the Church is without proofs if they are right.

814

Montaigne against miracles.

Montaigne for miracles.

815

It is not possible to have a reasonable belief against miracles.

816

Unbelievers the most credulous. They believe the miracles of Vespasian, in order not to believe those of Moses.

817

Title: How it happens that men believe so many liars, who say that they have seen miracles, and do not believe any of those who say that they have secrets to make men immortal, or restore youth to them. — Having considered how it happens that so great credence is given to so many impostors, who say they have remedies, often to the length of men putting their lives into their hands, it has appeared to me that the true cause is that there are true remedies. For it would not be possible that there should be so many false remedies, and that so much faith should be placed in them, if there were none true. If there had never been any remedy for any ill, and all ills had been incurable, it is impossible that men should have imagined that they could give remedies, and still more impossible that so many others should have believed those who boasted of having remedies; in the same way as did a man boast of preventing death, no one would believe him, because there is no example of this. But as there were a number of remedies found to be true by the very knowledge of the greatest men, the belief of men is thereby induced; and, this being known to be possible, it has been therefore concluded that it was. For people commonly reason thus: “A thing is possible, therefore it

is”; because the thing cannot be denied generally, since there are particular effects which are true, the people, who cannot distinguish which among these particular effects are true, believe them all. In the same way, the reason why so many false effects are credited to the moon, is that there are some true, as the tide.

It is the same with prophecies, miracles, divination by dreams, sorceries, &c. For if there had been nothing true in all this, men would have believed nothing of them; and thus, instead of concluding that there are no true miracles because there are so many false, we must, on the contrary, say that there certainly are true miracles, since there are false, and that there are false miracles only because some are true. We must reason in the same way about religion; for it would not be possible that men should have imagined so many false religions, if there had not been a true one. The objection to this is that savages have a religion; but the answer is that they have heard the true spoken of, as appears by the deluge, circumcision, the cross of Saint Andrew, &c.

818

Having considered how it comes that there are so many false miracles, false revelations, sorceries, &c., it has seemed to me that the true cause is that there are some true; for it would not be possible that there should be so many false miracles, if there were none true, nor so many false revelations, if there were none true, nor so many false religions, if there were not one true. For if there had never been all this, it is almost impossible that men should have imagined it, and still more impossible that so many others should have believed it. But as there have been very great things true, and as they have been believed by great men, this impression has been the cause that nearly everybody is rendered capable of believing also the false. And thus, instead of concluding that there are no true miracles, since there are so many false, it must be said, on the contrary, that there are true miracles, since there are so many false; and that there are false ones only because there are true; and that in the same way there are false religions because

there is one true. — Objection to this: savages have a religion. But this is because they have heard the true spoken of, as appears by the cross of Saint Andrew, the deluge, circumcision, &c. — This arises from the fact that the human mind, finding itself inclined to that side by the truth, becomes thereby susceptible of all the falsehoods of this…

819

Jeremiah, xxiii. 32. The *miracles* of the false prophets. In the Hebrew and Vatable they are the *tricks*.

Miracle does not always signify miracle, 1 Sam., xiv. 15; *miracle* signifies *fear*, and is so in the Hebrew. The same evidently in Job, xxxiii. 7; and also Isaiah, xxi. 4; Jeremiah, xliv. 12. *Portentum* signifies *simulacrum*, Jeremiah, 1. 38; and it is so in the Hebrew and Vatable. Isaiah, viii. i8. Jesus Christ says that He and His will be in *miracles*.

820

If the devil favoured the doctrine which destroys him, he would be divided against himself, as Jesus Christ said. If God favoured the doctrine which destroys the Church, He would be divided against Himself. *Omne regnum divisum*. For Jesus Christ wrought against the devil, and destroyed his power over the heart, of which exorcism is the symbolisation, in order to establish the kingdom of God. And thus He adds, *Si in digito Dei regnum Dei ad vos.*

821

There is a great difference between tempting and leading into error. God tempts, but He does not lead into error. To tempt is to afford opportunities, which impose no necessity; if men do not love God, they will do a certain thing. To lead into error is to place a man under the necessity of inferring and following out what is untrue.

822

Abraham and Gideon are above revelation. The Jews blinded themselves in judging of miracles by the Scripture. God has never abandoned His true worshippers.

I prefer to follow Jesus Christ than any other, because He has miracle, prophecy, doctrine, perpetuity, &c.

The Donatists. No miracle which obliges them to say it is the devil.

The more we particularise God, Jesus Christ, the Church…

823

If there were no false miracles, there would be certainty. If there were no rule to judge of them, miracles would be useless, and there would be no reason for believing.

Now there is, humanly speaking, no human certainty, but we have reason.

824

Either God has confounded the false miracles, or He has foretold them; and in both ways He has raised Himself above what is supernatural with respect to us, and has raised us to it.

825

Miracles serve not to convert, but to condemn. (Q. 113, A. 10, *Ad*. 2.)

826

Reasons why we do not believe.

John, xii. 37. *Cum autem tanta signa fecisset, non credebant in eum, ut sermo Isayæ impteretur. Excæcavit, &c.*

Hæc dixit Isaias, quando vidit gloriam ejus et locutus est de eo. Judæi signa petunt et Græci sapientiam quærunt, nos autem Jesum crucifixum. Sed plenum signis, sed plenum sapientia; vos autem Christum non crucifixum et religionem sine miraculis et sine sapientia.

What makes us not believe in the true miracles, is want of love. John: *Sed vos non creditis, quia non estis ex ovibus.* What makes us believe the false is want of love. 1 Thess. ii.

The foundation of religion. It is the miracles. What then? Does God speak against miracles, against the foundations of the faith which we have in Him?

If there is a God, faith in God must exist on earth. Now the miracles of Jesus Christ are not foretold by Antichrist, but the miracles of Antichrist are foretold by Jesus Christ. And so if Jesus Christ were not the Messiah, He would have indeed led into error; but Antichrist cannot surely lead into error. When Jesus Christ foretold the miracles of Antichrist, did He think of destroying faith in His own miracles?

Moses foretold Jesus Christ, and bade to follow Him. Jesus Christ foretold Antichrist, and forbade to follow him.

It was impossible that in the time of Moses men should keep their faith for Antichrist, who was unknown to them. But it is quite easy, in the time of Antichrist, to believe in Jesus Christ, already known.

There is no reason for believing in Antichrist, which there is not for believing in Jesus Christ. But there are reasons for believing in Jesus Christ, which there are not for believing in the other.

827

Judges xiii. 23: “If the Lord were pleased to kill us. He would not have shewed us all these things.”

Hezekiah, Sennacherib.

Jeremiah. Hananiah, the false prophet, dies in seven months.

2 Macc. iii. The temple, ready for pillage, miraculously succored. — 2 Macc. xv.

1 Kings, xvii. The widow to Elijah, who had restored her son, "By this I know that thy words are true."

1 Kings, xviii. Elijah with the prophets of Baal.

In the dispute concerning the true God and the truth of religion, there has never happened any miracle on the side of error, and not of truth.

828

Opposition. — Abel, Cain; Moses, the Magicians; Elijah, the false prophets: Jeremiah, Hananiah; Micaiah, the false prophets; Jesus Christ, the Pharisees; St. Paul, Bar-jesus; the Apostles, the Exorcists; Christians, unbelievers; Catholics, heretics; Elijah, Enoch; Antichrist.

829

Jesus Christ says that the Scriptures testify of Him. But He does not point out in what respect.

Even the prophecies could not prove Jesus Christ during His life; and so, men would not have been culpable for not believing in Him before His death, had the miracles not sufficed without doctrine. Now those who did not believe in Him, when He was still alive, were sinners, as He said Himself, and without excuse. Therefore they must have had proof beyond doubt, which they resisted. Now, they had not the prophecies, but only the miracles. Therefore the latter suffice, when the doctrine is not inconsistent with them; and they ought to be believed.

John, vii. 40. *Dispute among the Jews as among the Christians of to-day.* Some believed in Jesus Christ; others believed Him not, because of the prophecies which said that He should be born in Bethlehem. They should have considered more carefully whether He was not. For His miracles being convincing, they should have been quite sure of these supposed contradictions of His teaching to

Scripture; and this obscurity did not excuse, but blinded them. Thus those who refuse to believe in the miracles in the present day on account of a supposed contradiction, which is unreal, are not excused.

The Pharisees said to the people, who believed in Him, because of His miracles: "This people who knoweth not the law are cursed. But have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? For we know that out of Galilee ariseth no prophet." Nicodemus answered: "Doth our law judge any man before it hear him, [and specially, such a man who works such miracles]?"

830

The prophecies were ambiguous; they are no longer so.

831

The five propositions were ambiguous; they are no longer so.

832

Miracles are no longer necessary, because we have had them already. But when tradition is no longer minded; when the Pope alone is offered to us; when he has been imposed upon; and when the true source of truth, which is tradition, is thus excluded; and the Pope, who is its guardian, is biassed; the truth is no longer free to appear. Then, as men speak no longer of truth, truth itself must speak to men. This is what happened in the time of Arius. (Miracles under Diocletian and under Arius.)

833

Miracle. — The people conclude this of themselves; but if the reason of it must be given to you…

It is unfortunate to be in exception to the rule. The same must be strict, and opposed to exception. But yet, as it is certain that there are exceptions to a rule, our judgment must, though strict, be just.

834

John, vi. 26: *Non quia vidisti signum, sed quia saturati estis.*

Those who follow Jesus Christ because of His miracles honour His power in all the miracles which it produces. But those who, making profession to follow Him because of His miracles, follow Him in fact only because He comforts them and satisfies them with worldly blessings, discredit His miracles, when they are opposed to their own comforts.

John, ix: *Non est hic homo a Deo, quia sabbatum non custodit. Alii: Quomodo potest homo peccator hæc signa facere?*

Which is the most clear?

This house is not of God; for they do not there believe that the five propositions are in Jansenius. Others: This house is of God; for in it there are wrought strange miracles.

Which is the most clear?

Tu quid dicis? Dico quia propheta est. — Nisi esset hic a Deo, non poterat facere quidquam.

835

In the Old Testament, when they will turn you from God. In the New, when they will turn you from Jesus Christ. These are the occasions for excluding particular miracles from belief. No others need be excluded.

Does it therefore follow that they would have the right to exclude all the prophets who came to them? No; they would have sinned in not excluding those who denied God, and would have sinned in excluding those who did not deny God.

So soon, then, as we see a miracle, we must either assent to it, or have striking proofs to the contrary. We must see if it denies a God, or Jesus Christ, or the Church.

836

There is a great difference between not being for Jesus Christ and saying so, and not being for Jesus Christ and pretending to be so. The one party can do miracles, not the others. For it is clear of the one party, that they are opposed to the truth, but not of the others; and thus miracles are clearer.

837

That we must love one God only is a thing so evident, that it does not require miracles to prove it.

838

Jesus Christ performed miracles, then the apostles, and the first saints in great number; because the prophecies not being yet accomplished but in the process of being accomplished by them, the miracles alone bore witness to them. It was foretold that the Messiah should convert the nations. How could this prophecy be fulfilled without the conversion of the nations? And how could the nations be converted to the Messiah, if they did not see this final effect of the prophecies which prove Him? Therefore, till He had died, risen again, and converted the nations, all was not accomplished; and so miracles were needed during all this time. Now they are no longer needed against the Jews; for the accomplished prophecies constitute a lasting miracle.

839

“Though ye believe not Me, believe at least the works.” He refers them, as it were, to the strongest proof.

It had been told to the Jews, as well as to Christians, that they should not always believe the prophets; but yet the Pharisees and Scribes are greatly concerned about His miracles, and try to show that they are false, or wrought by the devil. For they must needs be convinced, if they acknowledge that they are of God.

At the present day we are not troubled to make this distinction. Still it is very easy to do: those who deny neither God nor Jesus Christ do no miracles which are not certain. *Nemo facit virtutem in nomine meo, et cito possit de me male loqui.*

But we have not to draw this distinction. Here is a sacred relic. Here is a thorn from the crown of the Saviour of the world, over whom the prince of this world has no power, which works miracles by the peculiar power of the blood shed for us. Now God Himself chooses this house in order to display conspicuously therein His power.

These are not men who do miracles by an unknown and doubtful virtue, which makes a decision difficult for us. It is God Himself. It is the instrument of the Passion of His only Son, who, being in many places, chooses this, and makes men come from all quarters there to receive thes miraculous alleviations in their weaknesses.

840

The Church has three kinds of enemies: the Jews, who have never been of her body; the heretics, who have withdrawn from it; and the evil Christians, who rend her from within.

These three kinds of different adversaries usually attack her in different ways. But here they attack her in one and the same way. As they are all without miracles, and as the Church has always had miracles against them, they have all had the same interest in evading them; and they all make use of this excuse, that

doctrine must not be judged by miracles, but miracles by doctrine. There were two parties among those who heard Jesus Christ: those who followed His teaching on account of His miracles: others who said …There were two parties in the time of Calvin…There are now the Jesuits, &c.

841

Miracles furnish the test in matters of doubt, between Jews and heathens, Jews and Christians, Catholics and heretics, and slandered and slanderers, between the two crosses.

But miracles would be useless to heretics; for the Church, authorised by miracles which have already obtained belief, tells us that they have not the true faith. There is no doubt that they are not in it, since the first miracles of the Church exclude belief in theirs. Thus there is miracle against miracle, both the first and greatest being on the side of the Church.

These nuns, astonished at what is said, that they are in the way of perdition; that their confessors are leading them to Geneva; that they suggest to them that Jesus Christ is not in the Eucharist, nor on the right hand of the Father; know that all this is false, and therefore offer themselves to God in this state. *Vide si via iniquitatis in me est.* What happens thereupon? This place, which is said to be the temple of the devil, God makes His own temple. It is said that the children must be taken away from it. God heals them there. It is said that it is the arsenal of hell. God makes of it the sanctuary of His grace. Lastly, they are threatened with all the fury and vengeance of heaven; and God overwhelms them with favours. A man would need to have lost his senses to conclude from this that they are therefore in the way of perdition.

(We have without doubt the same signs as Saint Athanasius.)

842

Si fu es Christus, dic nobis.

Opera quæ ego facio in nomine patris mei, hæc testimonium perhibent de me. Sed vos non creditis quia non estis ex ovibus meis. Oves mei vocem meam audiunt.

John, vi. 30. *Quod ergo tu facis signum ut videamus et credamus tibi? — Non dicunt: Quam doctrinam prædicas?*

Nemo potest facere signa quæ tu facis nisi Deus.

2 Macc. xiv. 15. *Deus qui signis evidentibus suam portionem protegit.*

Volumus signum videre de cælo, tentantes eum. Luke, xi. 16.

Generatio prava signum quærit; et non dabitur.

Et ingemiscens ait: Quid generatio ista signum quærit? (Mark, viii. 12.) They asked a sign with an evil intention.

Et non poterat facere. And yet he promises them the sign of Jonah, the great and wonderful miracle of his resurrection.

Nisi videritis signa, non creditis. He does not blame them for not believing unless there are miracles, but for not believing unless they are themselves spectators of them.

Antichrist in *signis mendacibus*, says Saint Paul, 2 Thess. ii.

Secundum operationem Satanæ, in seductione iis qui pereunt et quod charitatem veritatis non receperunt ut salvi fierent, ideo mittet illis Deus operationes erroris ut credant mendacio.

As in the passage of Moses: *Tentat enim vos Deus, utrum diligatis eum.*

Ecce prædixi vobis: vos ergo videte.

843

Here is not the country of truth. She wanders unknown amongst men. God has covered her with a veil, which leaves her unrecognised by those who do not hear her voice. Room is opened for blasphemy, even against the truths that are at least very likely. If the truths of the Gospel are published the contrary is published too, and the questions are obscured, so that the people cannot distinguish. And they

ask, “What have you to make you believed rather than others? What sign do you give? You have only words, and so have we. If you had miracles, good and well.” That doctrine ought to be supported by miracles is a truth, which they misuse in order to revile doctrine. And if miracles happen, it is said that miracles are not enough without doctrine; and this is another truth, which they misuse in order to revile miracles.

Jesus Christ cured the man born blind, and performed a number of miracles on the Sabbath day. In this way He blinded the Pharisees, who said that miracles must be judged by doctrine.

“We have Moses: but, as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is.” It is wonderful that you know not whence He is, and yet He does such miracles.

Jesus Christ spoke neither against God, nor against Moses.

Antichrist and the false prophets, foretold by both Testaments, will speak openly against God and against Jesus Christ. Who is not hidden…God would not allow him, who would be a secret enemy, to do miracles openly.

In a public dispute where the two parties profess to be for God, for Jesus Christ, for the Church, miracles have never been on the side of the false Christians, and the other side has never been without a miracle.

“He hath a devil.” John, x. 21. And others said, “Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?”

The proofs which Jesus Christ and the apostles draw from Scripture are not conclusive; for they say only that Moses foretold that a prophet should come. But they do not thereby prove that this is He; and that is the whole question. These passages therefore serve only to show that they are not contrary to Scripture, and that there appears no inconsistency, but not that there is agreement. Now this is enough, namely, exclusion of inconsistency, along with miracles.

There is a mutual duty between God and men. We must pardon Him this saying: Quid debui? “Accuse me,” said God in Isaiah.

“God must fulfil His promises,” &c.

Men owe it to God to accept the religion which He sends. God owes it to men not to lead them into error. Now, they would be led into error, if the workers of miracles announced a doctrine which should not appear evidently false to the light of common sense, and if a greater worker of miracles had not already warned men not to believe them.

Thus, if there were divisions in the Church, and the Arians, for example, who declared themselves founded on Scripture just as the Catholics, had done miracles, and not the Catholics, men should have been led into error.

For, as a man, who announces to us the secrets of God, is not worthy to be believed on his private authority, and that is why the ungodly doubt him; so when a man, as a token of the communion which he has with God, raises the dead, foretells the future, removes the seas, heals the sick, there is none so wicked as not to bow to him, and the incredulity of Pharaoh and the Pharisees is the effect of a supernatural obduracy.

When therefore we see miracles and a doctrine not suspicious, both on one side, there is no difficulty. But when we see miracles and suspicious doctrine on the same side, we must then see which is the clearest. Jesus Christ was suspected.

Barjesus blinded. The power of God surpasses that of His enemies.

The Jewish exorcists beaten by the devils, saying, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?"

Miracles are for doctrine, and not doctrine for miracles.

If the miracles are true, shall we be able to persuade men of all doctrine? No; for this will not come to pass. *Si angelus*...

Rule: we must judge of doctrine by miracles; we must judge of miracles by doctrine. All this is true, but contains no contradiction.

For we must distinguish the times.

How glad you are to know the general rules, thinking thereby to set up dissension, and render all useless! We shall prevent you, my father; truth is one and constant.

It is impossible, from the duty of God to men, that a man, hiding his evil teaching, and only showing the good, saying that he conforms to God and the Church, should do miracles so as to instil insensibly a false and subtle doctrine. This cannot happen.

And still less, that God, who knows the heart, should perform miracles in favour of such an one.

844

The three marks of religion: perpetuity, a good life, miracles. They destroy perpetuity by their doctrine of probability; a good life by their morals; miracles by destroying either their truth or the conclusions to be drawn from them.

If we believe them, the Church will have nothing to do with perpetuity, holiness, and miracles. The heretics deny them, or deny the conclusions to be drawn from them; they do the same. But one would need to have no sincerity in order to deny them, or again to lose one's senses in order to deny the conclusions to be drawn from them. Nobody has ever suffered martyrdom for the miracles which he says he has seen; for the folly of men goes perhaps to the length of martyrdom, for those which the Turks believe by tradition, but not for those which they have seen.

845

The heretics have always attacked these three marks, which they have not.

846

First objection: "An angel from heaven. We must not judge of truth by miracles, but of miracles by truth. Therefore the miracles are useless."

Now they are of use, and they must not be in opposition to the truth. Therefore what Father Lingende has said, that "God will not permit that a miracle may lead into error…"

When there shall be a controversy in the same Church, miracle will decide.

Second objection: "But Antichrist will do miracles."

The magicians of Pharaoh did not entice to error. Thus we cannot say to Jesus respecting Antichrist, "You have led me into error." For Antichrist will do them against Jesus Christ, and so they cannot lead into error. Either God will not permit false miracles, or He will procure greater. [Jesus Christ has existed since the beginning of the world: this is more impressive than all the miracles of Antichrist.]

If in the same Church there should happen a miracle on the side of those in error, men would be led into error. Schism is visible; a miracle is visible. But schism is more a sign of error than a miracle is a sign of truth. Therefore a miracle cannot lead into error.

But apart from schism, error is not so obvious as a miracle is obvious. Therefore a miracle could lead into error.

Ubi est Deus tuus? Miracles show Him, and are a light.

847

One of the anthems for Vespers at Christmas: *Exortum est in tenebris lumen rectis corde.*

848

If the compassion of God is so great that He instructs us to our benefit, even when He hides Himself, what light ought we not to expect from Him when He reveals Himself?

849

Will *Est et non est* be received in faith itself as well as in miracles? And if it is inseparable in the others…

When Saint Xavier works miracles. — [Saint Hilary. Ye wretches, who oblige us to speak of miracles.]

Unjust judges, make not your own laws on the moment; judge by those which are established, and by yourselves. *Væ qui conditis leges iniquas.*

Miracles endless, false.

In order to weaken your adversaries, you disarm the whole Church.

If they say that our salvation depends upon God, they are "heretics." If they say that they are obedient to the Pope, that is "hypocrisy." If they are ready to subscribe to all the articles, that is not enough. If they say that a man must not be killed for an apple, "they attack the morality of Catholics." If miracles are done among them, it is not a sign of holiness, and is, on the contrary, a symptom of heresy.

The way in which the Church has existed is that truth has been without dispute, or, if it has been contested, there has been the Pope, or, failing him, there has been the Church.

850

The five propositions condemned, but no miracle; for the truth was not attacked. But the Sorbonne … but the bull …

It is impossible that those who love God with all their heart should fail to recognise the Church; so evident is she. — It is impossible that those who do not love God should be convinced of the Church.

Miracles have such influence that it was necessary that God should warn men not to believe in them in opposition to Him, all clear as it is that there is a God. Without this they would have been able to disturb men.

And thus so far from these passages, Deut. xiii., making against the authority of the miracles, nothing more indicates their influence. And the same in respect of Antichrist. "To seduce, if it were possible, even the elect."

851

The history of the man born blind.

What says Saint Paul? Does he continually speak of the evidence of the prophecies? No, but of his own miracle. What says Jesus Christ? Does He speak of the evidence of the prophecies? No; His death had not fulfilled them. But He says, *Si non fecissem.* Believe the works.

Two supernatural foundations of our wholly supernatural religion; one visible, the other invisible; miracles with grace, miracles without grace.

The synagogue, which has been treated with love as a type of the Church, and with hatred, because it was only the type, has been restored, being on the point of falling when it was well with God, and thus a type. Miracles prove the power which God has over hearts, by that which He exercises over bodies.

The Church has never approved a miracle among heretics.

Miracles a support of religion: they have been the test of Jews; they have been the test of Christians, saints, innocents, and true believers.

A miracle among schismatics is not so much to be feared; for schism, which is more obvious than a miracle, visibly indicates their error. But when there is no schism, and error is in question, miracle decides.

Si non fecissem quæ alius non fecit. The wretches who have obliged us to speak of miracles.

Abraham and Gideon confirm faith by miracles.

Judith. God speaks at last in their greatest oppression.

If the cooling of love leaves the Church almost without believers, miracles will rouse them. This is one of the last effects of grace.

If one miracle were wrought among the Jesuits!

When a miracle disappoints the expectation of those in whose presence it happens, and there is a disproportion between the state of their faith and the instrument of the miracle, it ought then to induce them to change. But with you it is otherwise. There would be as much reason in saying that, if the Eucharist raised a dead man, it would be necessary for one to turn a Calvinist rather than remain a

Catholic. But when it crowns the expectation, and those who hoped that God would bless the remedies, see themselves healed without remedies…

The ungodly. — No sign has ever happened on the part of the devil without a stronger sign on the part of God, or even without it having been foretold that such would happen.

852

Unjust persecutors of those whom God visibly protects. If they reproach you with your excesses, "they speak as the heretics." If they say that the grace of Jesus Christ distinguishes us, "they are heretics." If they do miracles, "it is the mark of their heresy."

Ezekiel. — They say: These are the people of God who speak thus.

It is said, "Believe in the Church"; but it is not said, "Believe in miracles"; because the last is natural, and not the first. The one had need of a precept, not the other. Hezekiah.

The synagogue was only a type, and thus it did not perish; and it was only a type, and so it is decayed. It was a type which contained the truth, and thus it has lasted until it no longer contained the truth.

My reverend father, all this happened in types. Other religions perish; this one perishes not.

Miracles are more important than you think. They have served for the foundation, and will serve for the continuation of the Church till Antichrist, till the end.

The two witnesses.

In the Old Testament and the New, miracles are performed in connection with types. Salvation, or an useless thing, if not to show that we must submit to the Scriptures: type of the sacrament.

853

[We must judge soberly of divine ordinances, my father. Saint Paul in the isle of Malta.]

854

The hardness of the Jesuits then surpasses that of the Jews, since those refused to believe Jesus Christ innocent only because they doubted if His miracles were of God. Whereas the Jesuits, though unable to doubt that the miracles of Port Royal are of God, do not cease to doubt still the innocence of that house.

855

I suppose that men believe miracles. You corrupt religion either in favour of your friends, or against your enemies. You arrange it at your will.

856

On the miracle. — As God has made no family more happy, let it also be the case that He find none more thankful.

SECTION XIV. Appendix: Polemical Fragments

857



CLEARNESS, OBSCURITY. — There would be too great darkness, if truth had not visible signs. This is a wonderful one, that it has always been preserved in one Church and one visible assembly [of men]. There would be too great clearness, if there were only one opinion in this Church. But in order to recognise what is true, one has only to look at what has always existed; for it is certain that truth has always existed, and that nothing false has always existed.

858

The history of the Church ought properly to be called the history of truth.

859

There is a pleasure in being in a ship beaten about by a storm, when we are sure that it will not founder. The persecutions which harass the Church are of this nature.

860

In addition to so many other signs of piety, they are also persecuted, which is the best sign of piety.

861

The Church is an excellent state, when it is sustained by God only.

The Church has always been attacked by opposite errors, but perhaps never at the same time, as now. And if she suffer more because of the multiplicity of errors, she derives this advantage from it, that they destroy each other. She complains of both, but far more of the Calvinists, because of the schism.

It is certain that many of the two opposite sects are deceived. They must be disillusioned.

Faith embraces many truths which seem to contradict each other. *There is a time to laugh, and a time to weep*, &c. *Responde, Ne respondeas*, &c.[1]

The source of this is the union of the two natures in Jesus Christ; and also the two worlds (the creation of a new heaven and a new earth; a new life and a new death; all things double, and the same names remaining); and finally the two natures that are in the righteous, (for they are the two worlds, and a member and image of Jesus Christ. And thus all the names suit them: righteous, yet sinners; dead, yet living; living, yet dead; elect, yet outcast, &c.).

There are then a great number of truths, both of faith and of morality, which seem contradictory, and which all hold good together in a wonderful system. The source of all heresies is the exclusion of some of these truths; and the source of all the objections which the heretics make against us is the ignorance of some of our truths. And it generally happens that, unable to conceive the connection of two opposite truths, and believing that the admission of one involves the exclusion of the other, they adhere to the one, exclude the other, and think of us as opposed to them. Now exclusion is the cause of their heresy; and ignorance that we hold the other truth causes their objections.

1st example: Jesus Christ is God and man. The Arians, unable to reconcile these things, which they believe incompatible, say that He is man; in this they are Catholics. But they deny that He is God; in this they are heretics. They allege that we deny His humanity; in this they are ignorant.

2nd example: On the subject of the Holy Sacrament. We believe that, the substance of the bread being changed, and being consubstantial with that of the body of our Lord, Jesus Christ is therein really present. That is one truth. Another is that this Sacrament is also a type of the cross and of glory, and a commemoration of the two. That is the Catholic faith, which comprehends these two truths which seem opposed.

The heresy of to-day, not conceiving that this Sacrament contains at the same time both the presence of Jesus Christ and a type of Him, and that it is a sacrifice and a commemoration of a sacrifice, believes that neither of these truths can be admitted without excluding the other for this reason.

They fasten to this point alone, that this Sacrament is typical; and in this they are not heretics. They think that we exclude this truth; hence it comes that they raise so many objections to us out of the passages of the Fathers which assert it. Finally, they deny the presence; and in this they are heretics.

3rd example: Indulgences.

The shortest way, therefore, to prevent heresies is to instruct in all truths; and the surest way to refute them is to declare them all. For what will the heretics say?

In order to know whether an opinion is a Father's…

863

All err the more dangerously, as they each follow a truth. Their fault is not in following a falsehood, but in not following another truth.

864

Truth is so obscure in these times, and falsehood so established, that unless we love the truth, we cannot know it.

865

If there is ever a time in which we must make profession of two opposite truths, it is when we are reproached for omitting one. Therefore the Jesuits and Jansenists are wrong in concealing them, but the Jansenists more so, for the Jesuits have better made profession of the two.

866

Two kinds of people make things equal to one another, as feasts to working days, Christians to priests, all things among them, &c. And hence the one party conclude that what is then bad for priests is also so for Christians, and the other that what is not bad for Christians is lawful for priests.

867

If the ancient Church was in error, the Church is fallen. If she should be in error to-day, it is not the same thing; for she has always the superior maxim of tradition from the hand of the ancient Church; and so this submission and this conformity to the ancient Church prevail and correct all. But the ancient Church did not assume the future Church, and did not consider her, as we assume and consider the ancient.

868

That which hinders us in comparing what formerly occurred in the Church with what we see there now, is that we generally look upon Saint Athanasius, Saint Theresa, and the rest, as crowned with glory, and acting towards us as gods. Now that time has cleared up things, it does so appear. But at the time when he was persecuted, this great saint was a man called Athanasius; and Saint Theresa was a nun. “Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are,” says Saint James, to disabuse Christians of that false idea which makes us reject the example of the saints, as disproportioned to our state. “They were saints,” say we, “they are not like us.” What then actually happened? Saint Athanasius was a man called

Athanasius, accused of many crimes, condemned by such and such a council for such and such a crime. All the bishops assented to it, and finally the Pope. What said they to those who opposed this? That they disturbed the peace, that they created schism, &c.

Zeal, light. Four kinds of persons: zeal without knowledge; knowledge without zeal; neither knowledge nor zeal; both zeal and knowledge. The first three condemned him. The last acquitted him, were excommunicated by the Church, and yet saved the Church.

869

If Saint Augustine came at the present time, and was as little authorised as his defenders, he would accomplish nothing. God directs his Church well, by having sent him before with authority.

870

God has not wanted to absolve without the Church. As she has part in the offence, He desires her to have part in the pardon. He associates her with this power, as kings their parliaments. But if she absolves or binds without God, she is no longer the Church. For, as in the case of parliament, even if the king have pardoned a man, it must be ratified; but if parliament ratifies without the king, or refuses to ratify on the order of the king, it is no longer the parliament of the king, but a rebellious assembly.

871

The Church, the Pope. Unity, plurality. — Considering the Church as a unity, the Pope, who is its head, is as the whole. Considering it as a plurality, the Pope is only a part of it. The Fathers have considered the Church now in the one way, now in the other. And thus they have spoken differently of the Pope. (Saint Cyprian: *Sacerdos Dei.*) But in establishing one of these truths, they have not

excluded the other. Plurality which is not reduced to unity is confusion; unity which does not depend on plurality is tyranny. There is scarcely any other country than France in which it is permissible to say that the Council is above the Pope.

872

The Pope is head. Who else is known of all? Who else is recognised by all, having power to insinuate himself into all the body, because he holds the principal shoot, which insinuates itself everywhere? How easy it was to make this degenerate into tyranny! That is why Christ has laid down for them this precept: *Vos autem non sic.*[2]

873

The Pope hates and fears the learned, who do not submit to him at will.

874

We must not judge of what the Pope is by some words of the Fathers — as the Greeks said in a council, important rules — but by the acts of the Church and the Fathers, and by the canons.

Duo aut tres in unum.[3] Unity and plurality. It is an error to exclude one of the two, as the papists do who exclude plurality, or the Huguenots who exclude unity.

875

Would the Pope be dishonoured by having his knowledge from God and tradition; and is it not dishonouring him to separate him from this holy union?

876

God does not perform miracles in the ordinary conduct of His Church. It would be a strange miracle if infallibility existed in one man. But it appears so natural

for it to reside in a multitude, since the conduct of God is hidden under nature, as in all His other works.

877

Kings dispose of their own power; but the Popes cannot dispose of theirs.

878

Summum jus, summa injuria.[4]

The majority is the best way, because it is visible, and has strength to make itself obeyed. Yet it is the opinion of the least able.

If men could have done it, they would have placed might in the hands of justice. But as might does not allow itself to be managed as men want, because it is a palpable quality, whereas justice is a spiritual quality of which men dispose as they please, they have placed justice in the hands of might. And thus that is called just which men are forced to obey.

Hence comes the right of the sword, for the sword gives a true right. Otherwise we should see violence on one side and justice on the other. End of the twelfth *Provincial*. Hence comes the injustice of the Fronde, which raises its alleged justice against power. It is not the same in the Church, for there is a true justice and no violence.

879

Injustice. — Jurisdiction is not given for the sake of the judge, but for that of the litigant. It is dangerous to tell this to the people. But the people have too much faith in you; it will not harm them, and may serve you. It should therefore be made known. *Pasce oveas meas, non tuas.*[5] You owe me pasturage.

880

Men like certainty. They like the Pope to be infallible in faith, and grave doctors to be infallible in morals so as to have certainty.

881

The Church teaches, and God inspires, both infallibly. The work of the Church is of use only as a preparation for grace or condemnation. What it does is enough for condemnation, not for inspiration.

882

Every time the Jesuits may impose upon the Pope, they will make all Christendom perjured.

The Pope is very easily imposed upon, because of his occupations, and the confidence which he has in the Jesuits; and the Jesuits are very capable of imposing upon him by means of calumny.

883

The wretches who have obliged me to speak of the basis of religion.

884

Sinners purified without penitence; the righteous justified without love; all Christians without the grace of Jesus Christ; God without power over the will of men; a predestination without mystery; a redemption without certitude!

885

Any one is made a priest, who wants to be so, as under Jeroboam.

It is a horrible thing that they propound to us the discipline of the Church of to-day as so good, that it is made a crime to desire to change it. Formerly it was infallibly good, and it was thought that it could be changed without sin; and now,

such as it is, we cannot wish it changed! It has indeed been permitted to change the custom of not making priests without such great circumspection, that there were hardly any who were worthy; and it is not allowed to complain of the custom which makes so many who are unworthy!

886

Heretics. — Ezekiel. All the heathen, and also the Prophet, spoke evil of Israel. But the Israelites were so far from having the right to say to him, "You speak like the heathen," that he is most forcible upon this, that the heathens say the same as he.

887

The Jansenists are like the heretics in the reformation of morality; but you are like them in evil.

888

You are ignorant of the prophecies, if you do not know that all this must happen; princes, prophets, Pope, and even the priests. And yet the Church is to abide. By the grace of God we have not come to that. Woe to these priests! But we hope that God will bestow His mercy upon us that we shall not be of them.

Saint Peter, ii.: false prophets in the past, the image of future ones.

889

…So that if it is true, on the one hand, that some lax monks, and some corrupt casuists, who are not members of the hierarchy, are steeped in these corruptions, it is, on the other hand, certain that the true pastors of the Church, who are the true guardians of the Divine Word, have preserved it unchangeably against the efforts of those who have attempted to destroy it.

And thus true believers have no pretext to follow that laxity, which is only offered to them by the strange hands of these casuists, instead of the sound doctrine which is presented to them by the fatherly hands of their own pastors. And the ungodly and heretics have no ground for publishing these abuses as evidence of imperfection in the providence of God over His Church; since, the Church consisting properly in the body of the hierarchy, we are so far from being able to conclude from the present state of matters that God has abandoned her to corruption, that it has never been more apparent than at the present time that God visibly protects her from corruption.

For if some of these men, who, by an extraordinary vocation, have made profession of withdrawing from the world and adopting the monks' dress, in order to live in a more perfect state than ordinary Christians, have fallen into excesses which horrify ordinary Christians, and have become to us what the false prophets were among the Jews; this is a private and personal misfortune, which must indeed be deplored, but from which nothing can be inferred against the care which God takes of His Church; since all these things are so clearly foretold, and it has been so long since announced that these temptations would arise from these kind of people; so that when we are well instructed, we see in this rather evidence of the care of God than of His forgetfulness in regard to us.

890

Tertullian: *Nunquam Ecclesia reformabitur.*[6]

891

Heretics, who take advantage of the doctrine of the Jesuits, must be made to know that it is not that of the Church…the doctrine of the Church; and that our divisions do not separate us from the altar.

892

If in differing we condemned, you would be right. Uniformity without diversity is useless to others; diversity without uniformity is ruinous for us. The one is harmful outwardly; the other inwardly.

893

By showing the truth, we cause it to be believed; but by showing the injustice of ministers, we do not correct it. Our mind is assured by a proof of falsehood; our purse is not made secure by proof of injustice.

894

Those who love the Church lament to see the corruption of morals; but laws at least exist. But these corrupt the laws. The model is damaged.

895

Men never do evil so completely and cheerfully as when they do it from religious conviction.

896

It is in vain that the Church has established these words, anathemas, heresies, &c. They are used against her.

897

The servant knoweth not what his lord doeth, for the master tells him only the act and not the intention. And this is why he often obeys slavishly, and defeats the intention. But Jesus Christ has told us the object. And you defeat that object.

898

They cannot have perpetuity, and they seek universality; and therefore they make the whole Church corrupt, that they may be saints.

899

Against those who misuse passages of Scripture, and who pride themselves in finding one which seems to favour their error. — The chapter for Vespers, Passion Sunday, the prayer for the king.

Explanation of these words: "He that is not with me is against me." And of these others: "He that is not against you is for you." A person who says : "I am neither for nor against;" we ought to reply to him…

900

He who will give the meaning of Scripture, and does not take it from Scripture, is an enemy of Scripture. (Aug.: *De Doct. Christ.*)

901

Humilibus dat gratiam; an ideo non dedit humilitatem?[7]

Sui eum non receperunt; quotquot autem non receperunt an non erant sui?[8]

902

"It must indeed be," says Feuillant, "that this is not so certain; for controversy indicates uncertainty, (Saint Athanasius, Saint Chrysostom, morals, unbelievers)."

The Jesuits have not made the truth uncertain, but they have made their own ungodliness certain.

Contradiction has always been permitted, in order to blind the wicked; for all that offends truth or love is evil. This is the true principle.

903

All religions and sects in the world have had natural reason for a guide. Christians alone have been constrained to take their rules from without themselves, and to acquaint themselves with those which Jesus Christ bequeathed to men of old to be handed down to true believers. This constraint wearies these good Fathers. They desire, like other people, to have liberty to follow their own imaginations. It is in vain that we cry to them, as the prophets said to the Jews of old: "Enter into the Church; acquaint yourselves with the precepts which the men of old left to her, and follow those paths." They have answered like the Jews: "We will not walk in them; but we will follow the thoughts of our hearts;" and they have said, "We will be as the other nations."

904

They make a rule of exception.

Have the men of old given absolution before penance? Do this as exceptional. But of the exception you make a rule without exception, so that you do not even want the rule to be exceptional.

905

On confessions and absolutions without signs of regret.

God regards only the inward; the Church judges only by the outward. God absolves as soon as He sees penitence in the heart; the Church when she sees it in works. God will make a Church pure within, which confounds, by its inward and entirely spiritual holiness, the inward impiety of proud sages and Pharisees; and the Church will make an assembly of men whose external manners are so pure as to confound the manners of the heathen. If there are hypocrites among them, but so well disguised that she does not discover their venom, she tolerates them; for, though they are not accepted of God, whom they cannot deceive, they are of men, whom they do deceive. And thus she is not dishonoured by their conduct, which appears holy. But you want the Church to judge neither of the inward, because

that belongs to God alone, nor of the outward, because God dwells only upon the inward; and thus, taking away from her all choice of men, you retain in the Church the most dissolute, and those who dishonour her so greatly, that the synagogues of the Jews and sects of philosophers would have banished them as unworthy, and have abhorred them as impious.

906

The easiest conditions to live in according to the world are the most difficult to live in according to God, and vice versa. Nothing is so difficult according to the world as the religious life; nothing is easier than to live it according to God. Nothing is easier, according to the world, than to live in high office and great wealth; nothing is more difficult than to live in them according to God, and without acquiring an interest in them and a liking for them.

907

The casuists submit the decision to the corrupt reason, and the choice of decisions to the corrupt will, in order that all that is corrupt in the nature of man may contribute to his conduct.

908

But is it *probable* that *probability* gives assurance?

Difference between rest and security of conscience. Nothing gives certainty but truth; nothing gives rest but the sincere search for truth.

909

The whole society itself of their casuists cannot give assurance to a conscience in error, and that is why it is important to choose good guides.

Thus they will be doubly culpable, both in having followed ways which they should not have followed, and in having listened to teachers to whom they should not have listened.

910

Can it be anything but compliance with the world which makes you find things probable? Will you make us believe that it is truth, and that if duelling were not the fashion, you would find it probable that they might fight, considering the matter in itself?

911

Must we kill to prevent there being any wicked? This is to make both parties wicked instead of one. *Vince in bono malum.*[9] (Saint Augustine.)

912

Universal. — Ethics and language are special, but universal sciences.

913

Probability. — Each one can employ it; no one can take it away.

914

They allow lust to act, and check scruples; whereas they should do the contrary.

915

Montalte. — Lax opinions please men so much, that it is strange that theirs displease. It is because they have exceeded all bounds. Again, there are many people who see the truth, and who cannot attain to it; but there are few who do not

know that the purity of religion is opposed to our corruptions. It is absurd to say that an eternal recompense is offered to the morality of Escobar.

916

Probability. — They have some true principles; but they misuse them. Now, the abuse of truth ought to be as much punished as the introduction of falsehood.

As if there were two hells, one for sins against love, the other for those against justice!

917

Probability. — The earnestness of the saints in seeking the truth was useless, if the probable is trustworthy. The fear of the saints who have always followed the surest way, (Saint Theresa having always followed her confessor).

918

Take away *probability*, and you can no longer please the world; give *probability*, and you can no longer displease it.

919

These are the effects of the sins of the peoples and of the Jesuits. The great have wished to be flattered. The Jesuits have wished to be loved by the great. They have all been worthy to be abandoned to the spirit of lying, the one party to deceive, the others to be deceived. They have been avaricious, ambitious, voluptuous. *Coacervabunt tibi magistræ.*[10] Worthy disciples of such masters, they have sought flatterers, and have found them.

920

If they do not renounce their doctrine of probability, their good maxims are as little holy as the bad, for they are founded on human authority; and thus, if they are more just, they will be more reasonable, but not more holy. They take after the wild stem on which they are grafted.

If what I say does not serve to enlighten you, it will be of use to the people.

If these are silent, the stones will speak.

Silence is the greatest persecution; the saints were never silent. It is true that a call is necessary; but it is not from the decrees of the Council that we must learn whether we are called, it is from the necessity of speaking. Now, after Rome has spoken, and we think that she has condemned the truth, and that they have written it, and after the books which have said the contrary are censured; we must cry out so much the louder, the more unjustly we are censured, and the more violently they would stifle speech, until there come a Pope who hears both parties, and who consults antiquity to do justice. So the good Popes will find the Church still in outcry.

The Inquisition and the Society are the two scourges of the truth.

Why do you not accuse them of Arianism? For, though they have said that Jesus Christ is God, perhaps they mean by it not the natural interpretation, but as it is said, *Dii estis.*[11]

If my Letters are condemned at Rome, that which I condemn in them is condemned in heaven. *Ad tuum, Dominc Jesu, tribunal appello.*[12]

You yourselves are corruptible.

I feared that I had written ill, seeing myself condemned; but the example of so many pious writings makes me believe the contrary. It is no longer allowable to write well, so corrupt or ignorant is the Inquisition!

“It is better to obey God than men.”

I fear nothing; I hope for nothing. It is not so with the bishops. Port Royal fears, and it is bad policy to disperse them; for they will fear no longer and will cause greater fear. I do not even fear your like censures, if they are not founded on those of tradition. Do you censure all? What! even my respect? No. Say then

what, or you will do nothing, if you do not point out the evil, and why it is evil. And this is what they will have great difficulty in doing.

Probability. — They have given a ridiculous explanation of certitude; for, after having established that all their ways are sure, they have no longer called that sure which leads to heaven without danger of not arriving there by it, but that which leads there without danger of going out of that road.

921

…The saints indulge in subtleties in order to think themselves criminals, and impeach their better actions. And these indulge in subtleties in order to excuse the most wicked.

The heathen sages erected a structure equally fine outside, but upon a bad foundation; and the devil deceives men by this apparent resemblance based upon the most different foundation.

Man never had so good a cause as I; and others have never furnished so good a capture as you…

The more they point out weakness in my person, the more they authorise my cause.

You say that I am a heretic. Is that lawful? And if you do not fear that men do justice, do you not fear that God does justice?

You will feel the force of the truth, and you will yield to it…

There is something supernatural in such a blindness. *Digna necessitas*.[13] *Mentiris impudentissime*[14]...

Doctrina sua noscitur vir[15]...

False piety, a double sin.

I am alone against thirty thousand. No. Protect, you, the court; protect, you, deception; let me protect the truth. It is all my strength. If I lose it, I am undone. I shall not lack accusations, and persecutions. But I possess the truth, and we shall see who will take it away.

I do not need to defend religion, but you do not need to defend error and injustice. Let God, out of His compassion, having no regard to the evil which is in me, and having regard to the good which is in you, grant us all grace that truth may not be overcome in my hands, and that falsehood…

922

Probable. — Let us see if we seek God sincerely, by comparison of the things which we love. It is *probable* that this food will not poison me. It is *probable* that I shall not lose my action by not prosecuting it…

923

It is not absolution only which remits sins by the sacrament of penance, but contrition, which is not real if it does not seek the sacrament.

924

People who do not keep their word, without faith, without honour, without truth, deceitful in heart, deceitful in speech; for which that amphibious animal in fable was once reproached, which held itself in a doubtful position between the fish and the birds…

It is important to kings and princes to be considered pious; and therefore they must confess themselves to you.

ENDNOTES.

[1] Proverbs xxvi. 4, 5.

[2] Luke xxii. 26.

[3] John x. 30; 1 John v. 8.

[4] “The greatest law, the greatest injury.”

[5] John xxi. 17.

[6] “The Church will never be reformed.”

[7] James iv. 6.

[8] John i. 11, 12.

[9] Romans xii. 21.

[10] Tim. iv. 3.

[11] “Ye are Gods.”

[12] “To thy judgement-seat, Lord Jesus, I appeal.”

[13] “Their desert by necessity was drawing nigh.” Wisdom. xix. 4.

[14] “You lie most impudently.”

[15] A man is known by his doctrine.”

Thoughts on Eloquence and Style

Translated by George Pearce, 1849

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EDITORIAL NOTICES.
THOUGHTS ON ELOQUENCE AND STYLE.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.



WE HAVE HERE placed, under a separate section, the too brief fragments which Pascal left behind him, respecting an art of which he had laid open every secret; for, whether he spoke or wrote, he was the most eloquent of men.

With the exception of a small number, these "Thoughts on Eloquence and Style" have been already published; but in the old editions they are scattered without order, and under various titles. To this an exception should be made of the Dijon edition, (1835) in which, for the most part, they are collected under one head. (French Editor.)

* * * * *

A considerable portion of these reflections have appeared in this country, in former editions of the "Pensées" but have never been heretofore arranged in any methodical order. Many, however, besides those from MSS., are now translated for the first time.

From this part of the volume, the reader will be pleased especially to notice, that all the paragraphs, or parts of paragraphs, titles, &c, having this mark + prefixed, are published in the French work from which this translation is made, for the first time from the original MSS.

(Translator.)

THOUGHTS ON ELOQUENCE AND STYLE.



I. + ELOQUENCE.

We require from a speaker both agreeableness and truth; but that which aims to be agreeable, must be based upon truth.

II. + Eloquence, too long continued, is wearisome.

— Princes and kings must sometimes unbend. To be ever on their thrones would be insufferable; greatness needs occasional relaxation from its dignities, that they may be the better appreciated.

— + Too much continuity displeases in all things. Cold is agreeable, and makes us enjoy warmth.

III. Eloquence is a portraiture of the thought; those, therefore, who overload with colour, produce a painting indeed, but not a portrait.

IV. Eloquence is the art of expressing things in such a manner, that, — first, the persons addressed shall listen not only without uneasiness, but with satisfaction; and, secondly, they shall feel an interest in the subjects discussed, and shall accompany them with beneficial reflections.

It consists, then, in a correspondence aimed at, on the one hand, between the mind of the writer or speaker, and the feelings of those addressed; and, on the other, between the thoughts as they arise in the mind, and the language which is made their vehicle; all which supposes a profound study of the heart of man, to acquire a knowledge of its most secret springs, and to draw out the desired emotions by appropriate language. We ought to put ourselves in the place of those whom we address, and to make trial upon our own heart of any touching or forcible turn of discourse; in order to ascertain whether the one is calculated to affect the other; and thus be assured, of carrying with us the sympathies of the hearer. We ought, as much as possible, to study simplicity and nature; and to give

no undue elevation to what is, in itself, low, nor to lower what is great. It is not enough that a thought or an illustration be intrinsically beautiful; it must be appropriate to our subject, in which nothing ought to be excessive, and nothing deficient. [This definition of eloquence is undoubtedly worthy of the author of the "Provincials," and bears with it its own evidences of authenticity. But it is not found in the MS. nor the copies; Bossut first published it, without stating whence it was derived.]

V. In every conversation, or discourse, we ought to be able to answer, if objection be taken, "What is it you complain of?"

VI. There are some who speak well, but write indifferently. The reason is, that occasion and circumstances produce an excitement, and draw from the mind more than would be elicited without such assistances. [Montaigne, Book ii., chap. 17. .. "I owe it to accident that I can talk more effectively than I write; movement and action give animation to speech."]

VII. + Miscellan. — Language.

Those who use antitheses to give effect to words, are like builders that put false windows in their houses, for the sake of symmetry.

Their rule is, not to speak accurately, but to produce exact figures.

VIII. + Language.

We must not turn our minds aside from their purpose, except for relaxation, and then only on suitable occasions: you may trifle when necessary, but not otherwise; if unseasonably, you will cause weariness. Whoever descends to trifling at unfitting times, will produce dissatisfaction; for such is the capriciousness of the fancy, that our feelings are apt to recoil upon themselves, and take the very opposite to the desired course, when we cease to experience pleasure: this latter is the coin for which we yield all that is asked of us.

IX. When we meet with a really natural style of composition, we are surprised and delighted; we looked for an author, and we find a man. On the other hand, persons of good taste, expecting in a book to find a man, are often surprised to meet with only an author: "plus poetice quam humane locutus es" Those do real

honour to nature, who show that she can treat of all subjects, not even excepting Theology.

X. If the lightning had fallen upon a low country, &c., poets, and others who can only reason upon things of that nature, would have failed of their illustrations.

XI. We put a mask on nature, and disguise her. We must not talk of a king, a pope, a bishop, but an " august Monarch," &c.; — not of Paris, but of "the capital of the realm."

There are some occasions when we should call Paris, Paris; others, on the contrary, when it may be called "the capital of the realm."

XII. When we meet with repetitions of words in a composition, and, on endeavouring to correct them, we find their removal would impair the effect, we should leave them: to do otherwise shows a blind fastidiousness which is unable to perceive that, in such a case, a repetition is no defect; this is one of those points, however, which admit of no general rule. [On the reverse of the paper on which this remark is written, are the following lines struck through:—".When I was a child, I locked up my book; and because it sometimes happened that I deceived myself in thinking I had locked it up, I became distrustful of myself...]

XIII. The meaning of a passage will be changed by the words made use of in its expression. Meanings receive from, rather than impart to words their force. To find examples of this.....

XIV. The last thing we do in composing a work, is to determine upon the mode of its commencement.

XV. Those accustomed to judge by feeling, understand little of reasoning; they decide by a glance, and are not able to search into principles. Others, on the contrary, who are in the habit of reasoning from principles, cannot enter into matters of feeling; principles are all they look for, and they can do nothing by mere sight.

XVI. When we are acquainted with a person's ruling passion, we are sure to be able to please him; and yet every one has some fancies opposed to his real

welfare, which he supposes contribute to it; this is a capriciousness which throws us off our scent.

XVII. When a description true to nature is given of a passion, or an incident, we feel an internal conviction of its fidelity, although we had before been unconscious of it; and thus experience a feeling of complacency towards the narrator. For he does not so much describe what is in himself, as what is reflected in our own minds, and this gives us satisfaction; besides that the sympathy thus formed between us and him inclines us the more to good-will towards him.

XVIII. + It is not in Montagne [We here retain Pascal's orthography: he always writes Montagne, instead of Montaigne.], but in myself, that I see everything I find in him.

XIX. + Montagne.

Montague's defects are great. Lasciviousness, — a vile quality, in spite of Mademoiselle de Gournay. Credulity, "people without eyes;' ignorance, "quadrature of the circle, a larger world" His sentiments on voluntary homicide and death; he induces an indifference respecting our salvation; "without fear, and without repentance." As his work does not profess to be religious, he is not bound to inculcate piety; but none are absolved from the obligation not to deter from its observances. We might excuse his free and voluptuous sentiments, under some circumstances of life; [In the margin are written, Nos. 730 and 231, which no doubt refer to the pages in Pascal's edition of the "Essays."] but we cannot excuse his heathenish views of death; for we must renounce every feeling of religion, not to desire to die as a Christian: while his aim throughout his whole book is to teach men how to hold life loosely, and quit it with ease.

XX. What is good in Montagne must have been of difficult acquirement. What is bad (I mean apart from his morals) might have been corrected with ease; he should have had a hint that he tells too many stories, and talks too much of himself.

XXI. When we cannot attain to truth, it is as well that there should be extant some common and prevalent error, which gives a degree of stability to the mind;

such as attributing changes of season, the progress of diseases, &c., to the moon. For the chief evil of man is a restless curiosity into things, of which he cannot acquire a knowledge; and error is less injurious than this fruitless curiosity.

+ The mode of writing most usual with Epictetus, Montagne, and Salomon de Tultie, is that which impresses the most, dwells longest in the memory, and is most apt for quotation; inasmuch as it consists of thoughts thrown out from the ordinary occurrences of life. Thus, when reference is made to the vulgar error — that the moon has an effect upon everything, we are always reminded of Salomon de Tultie's remark, " When truth cannot be discovered, it is well that there should be some universal error," &c.; which is the thought adduced above.

XXII. + Martial's Epigrams.

Man is prone to malignity; yet it is not directed against the unhappy, but against the proud and happy: to suppose the contrary is a mistake.

+ For concupiscence is the source of all our agitations; and humanity.....

— + We should endeavour to please persons of humane and tender dispositions.

— That on "the two one-eyed persons" is good for nothing; it affords them no consolation, and is only a vain conceit of the author. Whatever exhibits only an author's skill is worthless. "Ambitiosa recidet orna-menta."

XXIII. All the false beauties that we censure in Cicero find numerous admirers.

XXIV. + The same words, differently arranged, will convey a different meaning; and meanings differently arranged, produce different results.

XXV. Let no one say, I have said nothing new: the arrangement of the materials is new. When two persons are playing at tennis, they use the same ball; but one strikes it better than the other.

In the same way, I should wish always to be told that I make use of common words; and, if the same thoughts have not formed altogether another subject by a different arrangement, the same words will have formed other thoughts by their different disposition.

XXVI. Some authors, speaking of their works, say “my book, my commentary, my history,” &c. They are like ill-bred persons who have just got a house of their own, and are always talking of “my house” They would do better to say “our book, our commentary, our history,” &c.; for there is usually more that belongs to others in them than to themselves. [This passage, which is highly characteristic of Pascal, is not found either in the MS. or the copies, or any other MSS. that have been consulted. It was published first by Bossut, but without stating where it had been found.]

XXVII. Languages are a species of cipher, in which it is not letters that are changed into letters, but words into words; so that an unknown tongue is decipherable.

XXVIII. There is a kind of standard of agreeableness and beauty, which consists in a certain relation between our natural dispositions, whether it be feeble or strong, and that which gives us pleasure.

Whatever conforms to this standard pleases; be it a residence, music, discourse, poetry, prose, females, birds, rivers, trees, chambers, dress, &c.

Whatever is not adapted to this model displeases those who have a susceptibility of taste.

+ And as there is a perfect relation between a piece of music and a house formed upon a good model, because they resemble such model, although each in its respective fashion; so there is a perfect relation between things formed upon a bad model. Not that there is only one bad model; for there are in reality an infinite number. But take the case of a sonnet; and you will find it, when composed upon a bad model whatever it be, like a female dressed in this kind of ill taste.

+ Nothing shows more plainly the absurdity of this vicious kind of poetry, than to contrast it with the simplicity of nature, and then suppose a female dressed, or a house constructed, after such a fashion.

XXIX. + Poetical Beauty.

If we are to have a poetical beauty, we ought also to have a geometrical beauty, and a medicinal beauty. Yet we do not speak thus; and the reason is, that we well

know the object of geometry, — that it is to work out demonstrations; and the object of medicine, — that it is the healing of sickness; but we do not know in what consists that satisfaction which is the object of poetry. We do not know what is the model in nature which it seeks to imitate; and, for want of that knowledge, certain affected phrases have been invented, such as “golden age,”

“miracle of the day,”

“fatality,” &c.; and this jargon is called poetical beauty!

But carry your thoughts to the case of a female dressed after such a fashion as this, — this endeavour to express petty sentiments with tumid words, — and you will imagine a beauty decked out with beads, chains, and other tawdry ornaments. You would laugh, for you know what constitutes the real grace of women, better than you understand the pleasure aimed at by versification: but those who do not know this would be filled with admiration at all this finery; and there are many country places where such a damsel would be taken for a queen! Thus it is that we should call poems composed after this fashion, village queens.

XXX. + I have never been able to form, after an interval, exactly the same judgment respecting the same things. I cannot judge of a work that I am engaged in, while composing it: I must, like the painters, look at it from a distance, but not too great a one. How great should it be, then? Consider.

XXXI. Those who judge of a work without being possessed of rules, are, in reference to others, like persons comparing time with their watches. One says, “We have been two hours another, “We have been only three-quarters of an hour.” I look at my watch; I say to the one, “You are tired,” and to the other, “Time passes quickly with you, for you have been an hour and a half.” Thus I laugh at those who say time passes heavily with me, and that I judge by mere guess: they do not know that I decide by my watch.

XXXII. We do not get credit among people in general for a knowledge of versification, unless we bear about with us the air of the poet: and the same is the case with mathematicians, &c. Persons of genius, however, carry no such external

indications; but exhibit no difference between the occupation of the poet, and that of the embroiderer.

Persons of genius are not called poets, geometricians, &c; but they are all these, and know how to judge of all these things. You do not at first find them out. When they join you, they slide into the passing topics of conversation. You perceive in them no distinctive feature of mind, except when occasion arises to call it into exercise; then, however, they make themselves felt. It is the characteristic of such persons, that you never remark anything peculiar in their conversation, when the subjects are not of a literary nature; but when they are such, then you perceive their superiority.

It is, therefore, an ill compliment to say of a man on his coming into company, that he exhibits the poet; and it is equally so, if you only appeal to such a person, when the question turns upon the merits of a few verses. [“Et c’est une mauvaise marque, quand on n’a pas recours à un homme, quand il s’agit de juger de quelques vers.” The rendering here given to this clause, requires the insertion of the limiting particle que before the quand; and as this seems the obvious meaning of the passage, the word in question must, I think, have been omitted in the MS. (Transl.)]

XXXIII. + I prefer not to say of any one, he is a mathematician, or a preacher, or an eloquent man; but that he is “honnête homme” This is a universal designation, and is the only one that pleases me. It is a had thing when you only think of a man’s hook, on first seeing him; and I would rather that nothing remarkable were perceived in him, except when a proper occasion, should occur for its display. “Ne quid nimis let no one quality predominate, and give you, as it were, its nick-name. Think nothing about talking well, except when it is proper to he eloquent; and then think as much as you please about it.

(The following seem to he mere rough fragments or memoranda of passing thoughts, critical and otherwise, jotted down in his habitual manner.)

XXXIV. + To conjecture. — The interest I feel in your dissatisfaction.

+ M. the Cardinal did not wish to he guessed at.

— + “My mind is full of disquiet.”

“I am full of disquiet” would be better.

— + Eloquence which persuades by gentleness, not by authority. As a tyrant, not a king.

XXXV. + A predominant talent, which regulates all the rest.

XXXVI. + “To extinguish the flame of sedition” — Too flowery.

+ “The restlessness of his genius two high-sounding words: rather excessive. [These, and several of the preceding half-formed passages, seem to be rough memoranda, intended to be formed into illustrations of the rules of taste in composition which had preceded. (Transl.)]

+ Miscell.

XXXVII. + Mannerism: I was desirous of applying myself to this.

XXXVIII. + The doctor, who talks a quarter of an hour after he has said all he had to say, through mere love of hearing his own voice.

+ The Paroquet wipes his beak, although it is clean.

XXXIX. + “Comminutum cor:” St. Paul. This is the character of a Christian.

— + “Albe vous a nomme: je ne vous connais plus” — Comeille. [Tragedy of Horatii. Act ii., sc. 3]

An inhuman trait. Humanity is the opposite of this.

XL. + Pyrrhonien; an opinionated person.

— + No one calls himself a courtier, but he that is not one; so of a servant, a provincial, &c.; and I would lay a wager that it is the printer who has given that title to the “ Lettres au Provincial XLI. + Carriage, “ versé” or “renversé? according to the intention.

— + “Répandre” or “verser,” according to the intention.

XLII. + Symmetry.

+ It is what is perceived at a glance.

+ Its principle, that it cannot be otherwise without deformity.

+ Founded also on the human figure; whence it is that we see symmetry only in size, not in height nor depth.

XLIII. See remarks in II., IV. and V. of the “Jansenist they are serious and elevated. (Struck through in the MS.)

— + I equally dislike a buffoon and an inflated person.

— + We can make no friend of either one or the other.

— + They consult only the ear, because they have no heart.

— + The rule is, integrity.

— + Poet, and not “honnête homme.”

— + After my 8th, I considered I had replied sufficiently. (Struck through.)

— + Beauty of omission, of judgment.

— + These persons want heart.

— + We can make no friends of them.

Miscellaneous Thoughts

Translated by George Pearce, 1849

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL NOTICES.
MISCELLANEOUS THOUGHTS.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.



WE HAVE HERE collected, under the title of "Miscellaneous Thoughts," all the fragments, which, on the one hand, were too unconnected to he formed into distinct sections; and, on the other, could not he appended to any of the articles contained in the present volume, nor find an appropriate place in the "Apology for Christianity."

It is possible that some of these thoughts may have had a measure of connexion in the train of Pascal's reflections with his projected great work; but the larger number were, doubtless, the accidental fruit of the working of his powerful mind, to which all passing subjects afforded food for meditation.

We have not aimed to arrange them in a very methodical sequence; and only when certain of their number seemed to bear an obvious analogy to each other, have taken any pains to classify them at all.

When two paragraphs are separated by a line, it is implied that in the autograph MS. they are written upon two separate papers; and, on the contrary, those not so separated are on the same paper in the MS. The cyphers in Roman character, at the head of each of the Thoughts, are only intended to facilitate reference. (French Editor.)

* * * * *

A large proportion of these Miscellanies have appeared before, but scattered up and down among other sections of Pascal's writings, in which their place was not appropriate; and some (exclusive of those designated as from MS.) are altogether new. It will be obvious how valuable an addition is made to the collection, by the large number marked as now first collected and published from original sources.

As a whole, indeed, these fragmentary and fugitive writings furnish a code of important instruction upon a vast multitude of subjects; and, to some, perhaps, their unconnected form will present more attraction, than essays, better digested, and more consecutive in their arrangement. It must be considered singularly fortunate, considering how little, comparatively, of more sustained and revised composition the shortness of his life, and his infirmity of health, permitted him to accomplish, that Pascal should have possessed so fixed a habit, of committing his passing reflections and elementary thoughts to writing; by means of which, much that, in the case of other men is lost, and forgotten, has been preserved for the benefit of posterity.

(Translator.)

MISCELLANEOUS THOUGHTS.



I. + M. de Roannez once remarked:— "Reasons occur to me afterwards; but, in the first instance, one thing pleases or displeases me, without my being conscious of the reason; and another displeases me, for a reason which I do not discover till afterwards." I believe, however, not that the displeasure is felt for the reasons which occur to us afterwards, but that the reasons are discovered, only because the displeasure has been felt. [Second MS. Collection of P. Guerrier, p. 192.]

II. + When passion urges to an action, we are forgetful of duty. Our inclinations lead us, for instance, to read a certain book, and we read it, when we ought to be otherwise employed. Now, to correct this, we should purpose to ourselves to do something we dislike; and then we shall excuse ourselves, on the ground that we have something else to do; by this means we shall recall ourselves to our duty.

III. + The most irrational things in worldly affairs often become, through the evil tendencies of man, the most reasonable. What is there less reasonable, than to choose for the governor of a kingdom, the eldest son of a sovereign? We do not select for captain of a ship, the sailor of highest birth; such a rule would be improvident and ridiculous. But, because the nature of things is, and will ever remain such, it becomes reasonable and just; for who should be selected? The most virtuous, the ablest? Here we are at once at issue; every one pretends to be the most virtuous, and the most able. Let us then, we say, attach the pre-eminence to something that admits of no dispute. It must be the eldest son of the sovereign. There, our course is clear; there can be no contest upon that point. Reason can devise nothing better; for civil wars are the greatest of all evils. [MSS. of Biblioth. Roy., portfolios of Dr. Valiant Nicole, in his work on the "Education of a Prince," has given, with some modification, part of these sentiments of Pascal,

which, however, in their present state, are now published for the first time. The ordinary editions of the “Pensées” give only these lines:—” We do not choose for captain of a ship, that one among the sailors who is of the highest birth.” This remark, which in former editions has been appended to a passage with which it has no connexion, appears again in the MS., written in Pascal’s hand, in the form of an isolated note.]

IV. The power of sovereigns is founded both on the reason, and on the folly, of their people; but much the most on their folly. The greatest and most important things in the world are based in weakness; and this basis is admirably secure; for nothing is more certain than this, that the people will ever be weak. That foundation which consists in the soundness of their reason, and an opinion of their wisdom, is an unstable one.

V. + Sonne opinions of the people are sound.

The greatest of calamities is civil war. It is sure to befall, if an attempt is made to elevate merit only; for all will say they are deserving. The evil to be apprehended from a fool who succeeds by right of birth, is not so great, or so certain.

VI. + Sound opinions of the people.

For a man to be handsomely dressed, is not a mere vanity; for it proves that a number of persons are employed for him: he shows by his well-arranged hair, that he has a valet de chambre, a perfumer, &c., to attend him; his band shows the fineness of his linen, lace, &c.

Nor is it a mere matter of outside show and trapping, to carry various coats of arms.

+ Numerous emblazonments are the indications of bravery. Thus a handsome appearance is a proof of superiority.

VII. The people have some very sound opinions; for example: —

1st. To prefer amusements and the chase to imaginative reading. Half-instructed persons ridicule this, and pique themselves on proving from it the folly of the world; but, for a reason which they cannot discern, the preference is right.

2d. To pay distinction to men on external grounds, — such as nobility and wealth. The world affects triumphantly to prove the unreasonableness of this; but it is actually highly reasonable. [To this passage has been appended, by Pascal, the following note:—" Savages ridicule the idea of an infant king." This has been evidently taken from a passage in "Montaigne's Essays," in which he relates, that three inhabitants of the New World, whom he calls "Cannibals," came in his time to Rouen, and had a long interview with Charles IX., then an infant Some one asking them, what they had thought the most remarkable of all they saw at Rouen, they said, " In the first place, they thought it very strange that so many great men, bearded, strong, and well armed, should be standing round the king, (they probably meant the Swiss Guard,) taking orders from an infant; and did not rather choose one of themselves for their, sovereign." Essays, Book i., chap. 30.]

+ 3d. To be offended at a blow; or to be greatly desirous of glory.

+ Yet is all this very reasonable, on account of the other advantages connected with it; and a man who has received à blow, without showing his sense of it, is Overwhelmed with injuries and impositions. [It is very obvious, that in these passages Pascal is foregoing his habitual character of the Christian moralist; and, assuming the principles current in the world, lays down rules of conduct consistent with them. (Transl.)]

+ 4th. To labour for uncertainties; — to walk upon the sea; — and to traverse a plank.

VIII. Man is necessarily so much of a fool, that it would be a species of folly not to be a fool.

IX. + The world judges many things; for it is the ignorance of its natural state that forms the true tribunal of man.

Knowledge has two extremes which meet; the one is that pure natural ignorance, in which all are born; the other is that which is experienced by minds of the highest order. After traversing the whole circle, of human attainments, they find that they know nothing; and end in the same ignorance in which they set out. But it is the ignorance of learning only, that knows itself to be ignorant. Those

who occupy an intermediate place, — who have just emerged from their natural ignorance, and yet not attained to that of learning, — possess a sort of smattering of knowledge, and are looked upon as clever. These are the people that keep the world in commotion, and blunder in everything. They, and the common people, constitute the great bulk of mankind. They despise the latter, and are despised by them in their turn. They are erroneous in their judgments of everything, and the world is right in its judgment of them.

(On the reverse leaf of this last fragment, is written the following passage on Descartes' system of the world.) [Although this remark of Pascal may seem to be directed against the entire philosophy of Descartes, it is evident that it is specially suggested by the Sd Part of the "Principia Philosophise" entitled "de Mundo adspectabili" At page 415 of the MS. Autog., there are these detached expressions:—" Descartes, unprofitable and variable."]

IX. Descartes.

We are then, in substance, to say, that is produced by figure and motion; and that is true. But to say these things, {quels) and then compose the machine, is absurd; for it is useless, uncertain, and painful. And even were it true, we hold that all the philosophy in the world does not avail against an hour of suffering.

[We must be permitted a few remarks upon this passage, on account of the contradictory comments of which it has been the subject: —

1st. No one before ourselves had any knowledge of it, but through the two copies. We discovered it in the autograph MS., in clearing away part of the sheet of very thick paper with which it was covered, and which concealed it entirely from view.

2d. It is written very hastily, and bears the appearance of a mere rough note; it is afterwards erased, not subsequently and by another hand, but evidently by the hand and pen of Pascal.

3d. The two copies, which are both alike, agree also with the MS., excepting the word "quelle," which in the copies is erroneously substituted for "quels," &c. (French Editor.)

More phlegmatic natures might almost envy the pleasure which M. Faugère must have felt in the discovery of these unknown passages, and the zeal with which he defends his priority of acquisition. (Transl.)]

X. The habit of seeing sovereigns surrounded by guards, music, officers of state, and all those things which mechanically challenge respect and fear, inspires their subjects with reverence and dread, even when they axe seen alone, and without these accompaniments; because our thoughts naturally connect these customary appendages with their persons. And the world, not knowing that this is the mere effect of custom, supposes that it originates in some inherent force possessed by them; whence comes the expression, " There is divinity stamped upon the countenance," &c.

XI. The bonds which preserve distinction and respect between men, are necessary: there must be degrees of rank in society; — all being desirous of pre-eminence, all not being able to enjoy it, and yet some succeeding in obtaining it.

+ Let us carry our thoughts back to the first formation of these bonds. Men would doubtless fight, till the stronger prevailed over the weak; and then one party would gain the ascendency. But when that was once settled, the rulers, desiring that wars should cease, would ordain that the power they had themselves acquired, should devolve to others according to men's pleasure; some would remit it to popular election, some to hereditary succession, &c.

+ Then it is that imagination begins her part: hitherto force had done all; now force is aided in a measure by fancy; — in France it is aristocracy, in Switzerland the burgesses, &c.

These bonds, then, which maintain distinction towards one and another, are, in reality, those of the imagination.

XII. + The mighty efforts which the human mind sometimes puts forth, are not usually long sustained. It reaches the unwonted elevation, but holds it only for a moment; it does not maintain it, as a throne, for ever. [Montaigne, Book ii., beginning of ch. 29. " We sometimes feel our minds roused by the discourse or example of others far beyond their ordinary pitch."]

XIII. Man is neither an angel nor a beast: and the misfortune is, that those who seek to become angels become beasts, [Pascal says elsewhere of man, “ He is neither angel nor beast, but man,” MS., p. 120. Montaigne also has remarked, “They wish to get from among men, and escape from humanity. It is a folly: instead of transforming themselves into angels, they become beasts.” Essays, Book iii., last chap.]

XIV. + When good qualities are carried to an extreme, there are, on either side, almost an endless number of evil ones which insinuate themselves insensibly; and there are others, which crowd our way in multitudes; so that we lose ourselves in the evil qualities, and the virtues wholly disappear.

XV. How proper is it that men should hold their distinctions by external, rather than internal qualifications! Which of us is to take precedence of the other? Who is to yield his place? The least clever? I am as clever as he. Then we must fight for it. He has four lackeys, and I have but one; that is obvious to all; you have but to count them. Then it is for me to yield, and I am a fool to contest the point. Thus we keep the peace towards each other; and that is one of the greatest of all blessings. [This passage, which has been published from the first as Pascal’s, is not found in the autograph MS., or the two copies, although it is universally believed to be his. At page 79 of the MS. only is found this isolated note, ... “ he has four lackeys.”]

XVI. There is this great advantage in rank, that it puts a man forward in society, and affords him opportunities of acquiring knowledge and consideration, from the age of eighteen or twenty; all which other men can scarcely attain before they are fifty: it is thirty years gained, without trouble.

XVII. External ceremony consists in this, — to put ourselves to inconvenience for others. This appears a vanity, but it is, in reality, a thing well founded; it is as much as to say, “I would willingly inconvenience myself, if it were necessary, for you; since I do so when it can do you no service. Besides this, deference is the mark by which we distinguish the great. Now if our consideration were to cost us no trouble, we should yield it to every one alike; and then there would be no

distinctions in society: but by putting ourselves out of our way for such things, we mark these distinctions.

XVIII. The Swiss dislike the term gentry; and confer their high offices upon persons of the lowest birth.

XIX. + See the power of a fly. It gains battles; impedes the activity of the mind; devours our bodies!

XX. Cromwell was overrunning all Christendom: the royal family would have been destroyed, and his own permanently established, but for a grain of sand in his interior. Rome herself was trembling before him. But there was the little stone: he dies; his family sinks; peace is restored, and the king re-established!

XXI. Strange perversity of judgment! There is not a person in the world who does not prefer himself, and his own happiness, and the preservation of his happiness, and of his life, to that of all the whole world besides.

XXII. + There axe two sorts of persons who confound the distinctions between things, such as between festivals and working-days, Christians and priests, various kinds of sins, &c. Thence, the one sort conclude that what is wrong in ecclesiastics is equally so in ordinary Christians; and the other, that what is not wrong in Christians in general is allowable in ecclesiastics.

XXIII. The highest order of minds are most capable of perceiving originality of character. Ordinary ones see little difference between one person and another.

XXIV. + Yours, mine.

“This dog is mine” you hear poor children say: “That is my place in the sunshine there is the commencement and type of usurpation throughout the world.

XXV. It is curious to observe, that there are people who will renounce every law of God and nature, and yet will make laws for themselves, to which they pay implicit obedience: as, for instance, the brigands of Mahomet, robbers, heretics, &c.; aye, and logicians also. + One might suppose that the license of such persons would be unbounded, seeing they have freed themselves from such just and salutary restraints. [This is in Madame Perier’s hand-writing.]

XXVI. When it is debated whether we ought to make war, and destroy such a number of men, — thus condemning so many Spaniards to death, — it is one individual only that constitutes himself judge, and he an interested one: there ought to be a third, and a disinterested party. [It was then a matter of much public comment how lightly a war against Spain had been decided in council.]

XXVII. Inequality of condition among men is necessary. True: but, granting this, see how you open the door not only to supremacy of sway, but also to the highest degree of tyranny!

The mind requires occasional relaxation; but that opens, again, the door to the greatest excesses.

We must endeavour ourselves to put due limits to these things. In themselves there are none: law endeavours to fix such limits, but the mind will not endure them.

XXVIII. The great and the humble experience the same accidents, the same disquiets, the same passions; but the one are at the top of the wheel, and the other near the centre, and, therefore, are less agitated by the same revolutions.

XXIX. Who that had enjoyed the friendship of the Kings of England and Poland, and the Queen of Sweden, would have believed that the time would come when they would not find a retreat and shelter throughout the world? [Pascal, no doubt, here alludes to Charles I. of England, driven into the Isle of Wight, in 1647; to John Casimir, king of Poland, compelled to seek an asylum in Silesia, in 1655; and lastly, to Queen Christina, who abdicated her throne in 1654.]

XXX. + Tyranny + Consists in a desire of unusual and irregular domination.

There are various bodies of brave, of handsome, of witty, or of pious persons, each of which has its own sphere and rule, but none elsewhere: they sometimes encounter; and the brave and the handsome contend for mastery, — for their superiority is of a different nature. They can come to no agreement: and their error is, that each is determined to get the upper hand. Neither party succeeds, even by force; that avails them nothing with the wise, and can do no more than control the mere outward conduct.

XXXI. + Tyranny.

Such language, then, as this, is indecent and tyrannical:—" I am handsome, I ought to be feared. I am brave, I ought to be beloved. I am".....

Tyranny consists in aiming to get in one way what we can only properly get by a different one. We pay various degrees of deference to various kinds of merit: the deference of affection, to amiableness; the deference of fear, to force; the deference of implicit submission, to learning.

This deference ought to be yielded; it is an injustice to withhold it, and an injustice to demand one kind in the place of another. It is equally offensive and perverse to say, " Such a one is not brave, I will not esteem him; he is wanting in ability, therefore I will not fear him."

XXXII. + Diversity.

+ Theology is a science; but, after all, what are sciences? A man is an instrument; but, when you anatomize it, do you find it to consist in his head, his heart, the stomach, the veins, each individual vein, each part of a vein, the blood, each of the humours of the blood?

+ Town and country, from a distance, appear town and country; but as we approach we find houses, trees, roofs, leaves, flowers, insects, the separate limbs of insects, in infinite number. All these are included under the term country.

XXXIII. + Diversity is so endless, that every ones gait, tones of voice, cough, sneeze.... Fruits are distinguished; among grapes are the Muscats, those of Coindrieu, of Desargues, and of Cette. Furthermore, have these several places ever produced similar grapes, and has any one grape two seeds like each other? &c.

XXXIV. How many objects has the telescope discovered, which philosophy had never conceived of before? We should absurdly misinterpret the expressions of Scripture, as to the vast number of the stars, by saying "There are but a thousand and twenty-two; we are sure of it."

XXXV. + There are herbs upon the face of the earth; we see them ourselves. On the moon we can discern none. And on these herbs there are leaves, and on the

leaves insects; but beyond this nothing more? O rash presumption! Mixed substances, then, are composed of elements, and the elements not! Presumption again! See here a nice distinction: we must not speak of things that are not visible to the eye; let us talk like other people, but not think like them.

XXXVI. Time heals our griefs and our dissensions, because we change and are no longer the same persons; neither the offenders nor the offended are alike. It is as if we should encounter a people that we have irritated after the lapse of two generations. They are French, but not the same Frenchmen.

XXXVII. + It is not only that we see things under a different aspect, but with different eyes; we no longer care to find them alike.

XXXVIII. + Such a person no longer admires her whom he loved ten years ago. I doubt it not. She is no longer the same, nor he either. He was then young, and she also; she is now otherwise. Were she the same, he would perhaps admire her still.

XXXIX. + Inconstancy.

+ We fancy we may play upon man as we touch an instrument. He is an instrument indeed, but how irregular, capricious, inconstant; how full of discords! In doing it, we ought to know where are the...[The remainder of this passage is wanting. (French Editor.) This fragmentary remark will remind the reader of the passage in Hamlet: “There is much music, excellent voice in this little organ; yet cannot you make it speak? Why do you think that I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will; though you can fret me, you cannot play upon me.” — Act S, Sc. 7. (Transl.)]

XL. + Inconstancy.

Things possess various qualities, and the mind has various inclinations; for, nothing presents itself in a simple form to the mind; and the mind never applies itself simply to any object. Thence it happens, that we sometimes weep and smile for the same thing.

XLI. Our feeling of the emptiness of present pleasures, and our unconsciousness of the vanity of those which are absent, are the causes of our

inconstancy of mind.

XLII. The capability of a man's virtue ought not to be judged by extraordinary efforts, but by his habitual conduct.

XLIII. I have little admiration for an extraordinary measure of one virtue, such as bravery; unless I see at the same time an equally extraordinary measure of the opposite one; as in Epaminondas, who possessed great valour and great humanity likewise; otherwise it is not elevation, but rather a baseness of character. Greatness is not displayed by an extreme degree of one quality only, but by a combination of opposing ones, and by the harmony of all, one with another.

But, perhaps, this may be only a sudden movement of the spirit in one or other of the extremes, like the hasty blaze of a bonfire. Be it so; yet this at least shows a capability in the soul, if not greatness.

XLIV. Those addicted to irregularities charge the correct with deviating from nature, and say it is only themselves who follow her; as those on board a vessel fancy the persons on shore are receding from them: the same kind of language is heard on all sides. There must be some fixed standard of judgment. Those on shore judge those in the vessel; but where are we to have a fixed point in morals?

XLV. When all moves together, nothing appears to move; as in a vessel. When all fall into irregularities, none seem to go wrong. It is he who stands still that perceives, as from a fixed station, the deviations of others.

XLVI. Evil is common, and its forms are infinite; virtue is rare. But there is a species of evil, which is as difficult to be met with as what is called good; and that particular kind of evil, on this account, often passes for good. It needs a kind of especial greatness of mind to attain to it, as well as to that which is good.

XLVII. + The act of sneezing shall be seen to absorb a person as much as his ordinary occupation. But we do not draw from it the same inferences against the greatness of his nature, because it is involuntary; and even if he fall into it by an act of his own, it is still against his will; the act that caused it was done not for that purpose, but for another; and thus it is not to be regarded as a mark of the feebleness and abjectness of man.

+ It is no disgrace to a man to yield to sorrow; but it is disgraceful to yield to voluptuousness. This is not because sorrow comes upon us from external sources, and pleasure is of our own seeking; for we may purposely seek causes of grief, and sink under them, without this species of degradation. Whence is it, then, that it is noble to sink under sorrow, and disgraceful to be subdued by pleasure? It is, that sorrow does not attract and tempt us. It is, that we voluntarily choose it, and put ourselves under its yoke, while we possess a liberty of choice; and thus man yields, as it were, to himself: but in the case of pleasure, it is the man who is overcome by pleasure. Now it is mastery and sway that constitute glory, and subjection alone is disgrace.

XLVIII. When we are well, we wonder what we should do if we were sick; when we are sick, however, we use remedies cheerfully; our sufferings compel us. We have no longer any inclination for those exercises and amusements to which health prompted us, but which are incompatible with the pressure of infirmity. Nature then suggests tastes and inclinations suited to our present circumstances. It is only the fears that ourselves indulge, and not nature inspires, which cause us uneasiness; because they add to the circumstances in which we actually are, the feelings belonging to the circumstances in which we are not.

XLIX. We are so ill-constituted that we cannot take an interest in anything, without becoming disturbed if unsuccessful; — a result which a hundred circumstances may at any time bring about. Whoever finds the secret of taking satisfaction in good, without uneasiness at disappointment, has made a great achievement. + It is a kind of perpetual motion.

L. + Those who are always sanguine under adverse circumstances, and elated in prosperous conjunctures, if they do not suffer equal distress at untoward ones, are wont to be pleased under disappointment, and glad to discover grounds of hope, in order to show their continued buoyancy of spirit; and to cover, by the satisfaction they thus feign, that which they experience, from seeing the frustration of their affairs.

LI. + Our nature is formed for motion; total rest is death.

LII. + Marton perceives plainly enough, that our nature is corrupt, and man is fallen from virtue; but he does not perceive why he cannot rise again.

LIII. Man is full of wants: he loves only those who can satisfy them. Such a one is a good mathematician, it may be said; but then I must work problems; he would turn me into a proposition. Another is a great warrior; he would take me for a besieged fortress. I want a facile disposition, that knows how to accommodate itself to all my necessities.

LIV. A true friend is so valuable, even for the great themselves to speak in their behalf, and defend them in their absence, that they should omit no effort to possess one. But let them take care to make a good choice; for if they get hold of a fool, he will be of no real service, whatever good he may say of them; and, in fact, he will say nothing that is good; for, possessing no weight of character, and carrying no authority, he will slander them to his boon companions for mere good fellowship.

LV. As the understanding may be injured, so may the opinions. We form both by our social intercourse; and thus society, whether good or bad, tends either to form or impair them. It is, then, above all things important, to choose such society whereby they may be formed, and not impaired; and the choice cannot be properly made, if they have not been already formed and not impaired. In this manner the whole forms a circle; happy those who can deviate from it without danger!

LVI. Though some persons have no interest in what they affirm, we must not be too certain that they do not speak untruths: there are those who lie for the mere love of lying.

LVII. A man stands at a window to see the passers-by: if I pass, am I to say, he stands there to see me? No; he is thinking nothing about me, in particular. Now, when a person loves a female on account of her beauty, does he really love her? No; the small-pox, which may destroy her beauty, but leave her alive, will destroy his love also.

And so, if I am loved for my judgment, or my memory, is it myself that am loved? No; I may lose these faculties; yet I myself shall remain. Where then is the individuality, if it lies neither in the body, nor in the mind? And how can we love either the body or the mind, but for those qualities which do not form the individuality; inasmuch as they are perishable? Can we love the mind of another abstractedly, and without reference to its qualities? That cannot be. We do not then love the person, but only the qualities.

+ Let us then no longer ridicule those who affect distinction for their place and office; for no one is loved but on account of adventitious qualities.

LVIII. This " me" is hateful. You, Miton, disguise it; you do not, however, thus get rid of it; you are therefore still hateful.

Not at all; for in behaving, as we do, civilly to every one, none have any cause to hate us. That is true, if we only hated, in the word, the annoyance which it occasions us.

But if I hate it because it is usurping, because it makes itself the centre of everything, I shall never cease to hate it.

In short, the word has two qualities; it is usurping in itself, as it makes itself the centre of everything; it is injurious to others, even in designing to do them service; for self is the enemy of every one, and would be a universal tyrant. You may take away the annoyance it causes, but not its injustice; and thus you do not render it pleasing to those who dislike injustice. You render it pleasing only to those who are unjust themselves, and therefore do not consider it their enemy; and thus you continue unjust yourself, and can please only those who are the same.

LIX. It is an injustice that others should be allowed to attach themselves to me, though for their own pleasure, and with entire free-will. I should deceive them in permitting such a partiality; I can be no object for any to rest in, and have nothing that can afford them satisfaction. Am I not shortly to die? Then the object of in the following passage:—" He (Desbarreaux) preaches Atheism wherever he goes; and one day, at St Cloud, he was passing the Passion-week with Miton, a great gambler, Potel, Counsellor of the Châtelet, Raineys, &c., to spend their carnival,

as he said.” their pleasure will die also! As I should be culpable in suffering a falsehood to be believed, although it might be insinuated quietly, and told and received with satisfaction; in the same way am I culpable in suffering myself to become an object of attachment. If I attract the affection of others to myself, I ought to warn those who would make themselves parties to the deception, that they should be on their guard against it, whatever advantage might accrue to myself from it; and not attach themselves to me, when their life and their cares ought to be devoted to pleasing God, or seeking to do so. [This fragment presents the interesting feature, that it is in the handwriting of Domat, who has added the following note:—” Madame Perier has the original of this paper.” Madame Perier has reproduced the passage in her memoir of her brother.]

LX. + Vanity of Knowledge.

Knowledge of external things will not compensate my moral ignorance in a time of affliction; but moral proficiency will always afford me consolation under the absence of external knowledge.

LXI. I was for a long time immersed in the study of the abstract sciences, and became disgusted with the little communication that I could hold on such subjects with others. When I commenced the study of man, I saw that those abstract sciences are hot fitted for him; and that I departed further from my proper sphere, by my addictedness to them, than others in their ignorance of them; thus I excused them for knowing so little about these things. I thought, however, I should at least find companionship in the study of man, and that this was of all others the fittest for him. I was mistaken. There axe fewer who addict themselves to this study, than to geometry.

+ It is only through want of taste for this study that we are thrown upon others; but is it not that, after all, this is not the knowledge that man ought to possess; and that it is more for his happiness to be ignorant of it?

LXII. + We are so ignorant of ourselves, that many think they are going to die when they are well, and many think they are well when they are near death; not

perceiving the approach of an attack of fever, or that an abscess is beginning to form.

LXIII. The things to which we are most addicted, — such, for instance, as the careful concealment of narrowness of means, — are often very insignificant: a mere fancy, which our imagination magnifies into importance. Another turn of imagination reveals to us, in an instant, the fallacy.

LXIV. Imagination exaggerates petty objects, till they fill the mind in an extravagant degree; and, in the same way, with a rash presumption, she diminishes great objects, and brings them down to her own standard. This is seen in the manner of some, in speaking of the Supreme Being.

LXV. + Lustravit lampade terras. The weather has little connexion with my moods.

Fancies, with me, depend not upon weather. I have my storms and my sunshine within; the success or reverses of my affairs even, affect me little. I like to set myself against fortune; the very glory of overcoming her, elates me: and, on the other, hand, I sometimes feel depressed in the midst of prosperity.

LXVI. + Spongia solis.

When we see certain events always recurring alike, we conclude that they originate in a natural necessity; as that day will succeed day, &c.; but nature often deceives our expectations, and does not follow her own laws.

LXVII. The mind naturally inclines to some kind of belief, and the will to some kind of affections; so that, for want of proper objects, they are prone to attach themselves to such as are unfitting.

LXVIII. Grace will always be found in the world as well as nature, inasmuch as it is in a measure congenial to us. Thus there will always be Pelagians, and orthodox believers; and always conflicts going on between them.

It is the first birth that produces the one, and the second, the other.

LXIX. + Nature is ever recommencing the same things, — such as years, days, hours; spaces also, and numbers, follow uniformly each other. There is, by these means, formed a kind of infinitude and eternity. Not that any of these things are

really infinite or eternal; but these finite things multiply themselves infinitely; thus it seems to me, it is only the number which multiplies them that is infinite.

LXX. + When we hear it said, that cold is only the motion of certain globules, and light the “conatus recedendi” [This is the “ centrifugal force.” Pascal has borrowed this expression from the definition of light, given by Descartes in his “Principia Philosophic,” Part iii., see. 55.] which we experience, we feel surprised. And pleasure, then, is only a kind of excitement of the animal spirits. We had certainly formed an entirely different idea of these things, and such opinions are wholly opposed to all our prepossessions. The feeling of warmth, a sensation that affects us so differently from the touch, — the perception of sound and of light, — all these seem mysteries; whereas those definitions are as gross and insensate as a stone. It is true, the minute influences which enter by the pores affect other nerves, but they are nerves still.

LXXI. + Nature has a tendency to reproduce herself. A grain thrown into good soil, multiplies. A principle planted in a sound understanding, yields fruit.

+ Numbers resemble space, though in their nature they are so different.

+ All are produced and directed by the same hand: the root, the branch, the fruit, the principle, the results.

LXXII. + Nature works progressively: “itus et reditus.” — She passes on and returns; then recedes further, then twice the space back, then further than ever, &c.

+ The flow of the sea is in this form; the course of the sun is thus

Literally imitated from the MS.

LXXIII. + Man’s nature is not always progressive. It has its advances and returns.

+ Fevers have their chills and burnings; and the cold fits show as much the violence of the fever as its heats.

+ The inventiveness of man proceeds from age to age in the same course. — + The humanity and the malignity of the world is, at all times, much alike.

“Plerumque gratœ principibus vices.”

LXXIV. + After we have been accustomed to use bad reasons for establishing the phenomena of nature, we become unwilling to admit good ones, when they are furnished to us. The instance given was, the circulation of blood, to show why the vein swells under the ligature.

— + The history of the pike and the frog of Liancour. They always give this, and nothing else.

LXXV. + If an animal performed by reason what it does instinctively, and could utter by means of intelligence what it expresses by instinct, for summoning its comrades to the chase, and warning them that their prey is found at last, it would be able to speak in matters of more importance to itself: as, for instance, to say, “Bite for me this cord that hurts me, and which I cannot reach.”

LXXVI. + Emulation.

Animals have no affections. A horse feels no admiration for its companions. There is an emulation between them on the race-course, but it leads to no results; when they are in the stable, the dull and ill-made horse does not give up its oats to the other, as men require their fellows to do. They have no thought but for themselves.

LXXVII. + Emulation.

+ From early infancy, admiration spoils everything. “How well that was said! how well that was done! how clever he is!” &c.

+ The children at P. R., (Port Royal,) who are not allowed this incentive to envy and emulation, fall into indifference.

LXXVIII. Have you never met with persons, who, by way of reflection upon your moderate opinion of them, are fond of descanting upon the number of people of distinction who admire them? I should reply to all this, “Show me what are the merits that have procured you their admiration, and I will admire you myself.”

LXXIX. Would you wish that others should think well of you? say nothing about it.

LXXX. To pity the unfortunate is not opposed to self-love, but the contrary: persons are well pleased to have the opportunity of showing this mark of

humanity, and of gaining the reputation of tenderness at no expense.

LXXXI. Great actions concealed, are most to be admired. When I meet with such in history, as at page 184, [This passage is not in Pascal's writing. The person to whom it was dictated, no doubt omitted to note the book whence page 184 is here quoted: it is, in all probability, Montaigne's Essays.] I am greatly delighted. Yet, after all, they have not been effectually concealed, since by some means or other, they have become known; and although all that was possible was done by the parties to hide them, this little outlet by which they have come to light, spoils all: the finest part of all was the wish to conceal them.

LXXXII. The world is in possession of every good principle; it fails only in their application. For instance, no one doubts that we ought to expose our life for the public good, and many do it; but for religion, none!

LXXXIII. It is only the contest that gives pleasure, not the victory. We like to see animals fight, but not the conqueror destroy the conquered. What should we care for, except the end — the victory? And yet, as soon as that is attained, we are wearied. So it is in gaming, so in researches after truth. We like to watch the conflict of opinions, but when truth is demonstrated, our interest is gone. To revive our interest, new controversies must be created.

So with the passions: there is a pleasure in seeing two opposite ones in contention; but when one has the entire mastery, it becomes mere brutality.

It is not things themselves, but the pursuit of things, that we value. Thus, in plays, quiet scenes without agitation excite no interest, or misery without hope, or brutal passion, or unmitigated severity.

LXXXIV. See the vanity of the art of painting! To challenge admiration, by fidelity of resemblance to things for whose originals we have none.

LXXXV. Two countenances resembling each other, neither of which, when seen alone, causes ridicule, become laughable when brought together.

LXXXVI. Rivers are moving roads, which carry us on to our destinations.

LXXXVII. There are many who understand the sermon just to as good purpose as they understand the prayers.

LXXXVIII. A dealer in jests, a miserable character.

LXXXIX. + Experience shows us an enormous difference between devotion and goodness. [Montaigne says somewhere the same thing:—" Entre la dévotion et la bonté"]

XC. Discourses upon humility are occasions of pride to the vain, and of humiliation to the humble. So, those upon pyrrhonism are matter of peremptoriness to the peremptory. Few speak humbly upon humility; few chastely upon chastity; few upon pyrrhonism in a spirit of doubt. We are made up of falsehood, duplicity, inconsistency; and we hide and disguise these things from ourselves!

XCI. + Vanity.

+ The cause and the effect of love. — Cleopatra.

Whoever would fully learn the vanity of man, has but to consider the causes and the consequences of love. The cause is, perhaps, some indescribable trifle, "un je ne sais quoi," (Corneille,) and the consequences are tremendous. This trifle, this thing so insignificant that we cannot define it, moves the earth, its potentates, its armies, the whole universe!

Had Cleopatra's nose been a little shorter, the whole face of the world might have been changed.

XCII. + Vanity.

Wonderful indeed is it to see a thing so palpable as the vanity of the world so little understood, that to assert the folly of aspiring to its grandeurs should excite surprise.

XCIII. Vanity is so rooted in man's heart, that a soldier, a powder-monkey, a cook, a porter, will boast of their performances, and lay themselves out for admiration; aye, and philosophers also. And writers against such weaknesses seek praise for their good writing; and readers for reading it; and I, who am writing this, have perhaps the same desires; and so have my readers also.

XCIV. + Pride.

Curiosity is nothing but vanity. Persons, for the most part, wish only to learn, for the purpose of speaking of their knowledge. We should never undertake voyages or travels were we not to have to talk of them, — were it for the mere pleasure of seeing, without the hope of communicating what we saw.

XCV. In passing hastily through a town, we do not trouble ourselves about people's opinion of us; but when we reside in a neighbourhood for a time, we are anxious to be thought well of. What length of time should this be for? A time proportioned to our brief and fugitive existence!

XCVI. Such is our ambition, that we wish to he known by all the world, and even by those who are to come after us. And such our vanity, that the good opinion of half a dozen persons around us affords us content and satisfaction!

XCVII. + On the desire of esteem among those around us.

— + Pride keeps invincible possession of us amidst our errors, miseries, &c. We even part with life with satisfaction, provided we can be talked of.

— + Vanity, play, the chase, visits, foolish plays, perpetuating a name.

There is such a charm in glory, that whatever we connect with it, — even death itself, — we love it still.

XCVIII. + Men do not maintain themselves in virtuous conduct by their own power, but by the counterpoise of two opposing vices; as we remain stationary under the influence of two conflicting winds. Take away one of these vices, and we fall into the other.

XCIX. There are some vices which only maintain their hold by the instrumentality of others, and which, if the trunk is removed, fall off like the branches.

C. When malice gets reason on its side, pride is engendered, and reason is displayed in all its lustre.

— When austerity and severe habits have been unsuccessful in attaining true happiness, and nature is again followed, she becomes proud of her restoration.

CI. Never are evil deeds so thoroughly and heartily committed as when conscience assents.

CII. + Eclipses are said to presage trouble, because trouble is common; so that, as calamities are of continual occurrence, the prediction is often fulfilled; if they had been said to predict good, they would as often have proved fallacious. Happiness is assigned only to rare conjunctures of the skies; thus the divination is not often put to the test, CIII. I hold it to be a fact, that if all persons knew what they said of each other, there would not be four friends left in the world. [Pascal, doubtless, meant here to imply the same limitation (by nature) as in the Thought, No. CLV. (Transl.)] This is manifest from the disputes to which indiscreet reports, passing from one to another, often give rise.

CIV. You have a bad habit in saying, “Pray excuse me.” Now, but for the apology, I should not have known anything had been done wrong. Allow me to say, there is nothing amiss but the excuse.

CV. I do not admire all these compliments:—” I give you a great deal of trouble “I am afraid I am tiring you “I am afraid this is tedious.” Either you embarrass, or you give offence.

CVI. Cesar appears to me to have been too old when he set about conquering the world for his amusement. Such a pastime might do for Augustus or Alexander: they were young persons, whom it is difficult to restrain; but Cesar ought to have known better.

CVII. The example of Alexander’s chastity has not made so many continent, as that of his drunkenness has produced intemperance. It causes no shame in others to be less virtuous, and it seems excusable to be not more vicious than he. Persons think the vices they fall into not altogether those of the commonalty, when they see them to belong to such great men; not perceiving that in that respect they are on a level with the very lowest. Their resemblance to them is of the same kind as that by which they themselves resemble common people; for, however exalted they may be, there are points in which they come in contact with the mere dregs of society. They are not beings elevated, as it were, in the air, abstracted from every thing earthly. By no means. If they are greater than ourselves, it is that they overtop us in height; their feet are on a level with other men’s. In that, they are on

an equality, they stand upon common ground; and are ignoble as ourselves, as the most insignificant of beings, as children, as the brutes.

CVIII. + We like to trace the course of error — the passion of Cléobutine, for instance, because she is insensible of it: she would be uninteresting were she not deceived.

— + A king takes pleasure in the society of a prince, because the contrast diminishes the rank of the latter.

CIX. Reason sways us more imperiously than a. master; in disobeying the one we are unhappy, in disobeying the other we are fools.

CX. If we would reprove another with advantage, and convince him of his error, we should observe in what way he looks at the matter in question, (for there will usually be some measure of truth in his views,) and concede that point to him, while we explain to him the particulars in which his fallacy lies. He will be satisfied with this, for he will think he was not entirely mistaken, but only failed in seeing the question on all its sides. A man does not blame himself for not seeing everything, but he dislikes to find himself under an error; and this, perhaps, is because, naturally, all are incapable of universal knowledge, and yet, naturally, he cannot be mistaken in the way he looks at the matter: the impressions of the senses being always just.

CXI. + Shall we destroy life in order to prevent wickedness? That is to commit two crimes instead of one. “Vince in bono malum” St. Aug. [This sentiment, which Pascal, quoting from memory, attributes to St. Augustin, is from St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans, ch xii. 21:—” Overcome evil with good.”]

CXII. Force is the ruler of the world, not opinion; but opinion avails itself of force.

+ It is constraint which forms opinion. Slackness is, in my opinion, agreeable. Why? Because any one liking to dance upon a tight rope will be alone in his taste, and I can get up a larger number who will say, that it is not agreeable. [This passage, like a few others, is obscure; and I cannot feel certain that it is correctly rendered. (Transl.)]

CXIII. It is the effect of constraint, not of custom; for those who are capable of originality are few: the larger number will only follow the lead of others, and refuse praise to those who aim at distinction by their inventions. And if these latter persist in their object, and despise such as are not inventive, the others will treat them with ridicule, or even with violence, if possible. Let none, therefore, pique themselves upon such acuteness, or let them be satisfied to remain as they are. [The beginning of this passage, “It is the effect of constraint, not of custom,” was evidently connected with a preceding thought, which is wanting in the MS.]

CXIV. + Memory and pleasure are feelings; and even geometrical propositions become feelings; for reason renders them natural, and natural feelings are effaced by reason.

CXV. Venice.

+ What advantage would you derive from it, except for the necessities of the princes, and the honour of the people? If they had demanded it of you, and for obtaining it had invoked the aid of Christian princes, you might have made their plea available. But, that during fifty years all the princes should have been uselessly exerting themselves, and that there should have been such a pressing necessity to obtain.....

CXVI. The last act is sanguinary, beautiful as is all the rest of the play. Dust is cast upon the head, and there is an end, and for ever.

CXVII. + Death is feared when peril is distant, not in peril; for man must be man.

CXVIII. + Sudden death is the only thing to be feared; therefore it is that Confessors surround the persons of the great.

CXIX. Where is the difference between a soldier and a Chartreuse monk, in their habits of obedience? Both are dependent and must obey, and their exercises are equally painful: the soldier, however, has always a hope of attaining to command, but never succeeds; for commanders, and even princes, are slaves and dependents; yet, still he hopes and labours on: the monk, on the other hand, takes a vow to be never otherwise than dependent. Thus they are alike in the perpetual

servitude of both; they differ only in regard to hope, which the one always enjoys, the other has for ever renounced.

CXX. + Reasons which, viewed from afar, seem to limit our vision, — when near, limit it no longer; we then begin to see beyond them.

CXXI. Few things afford consolation, because few things afflict us.

CXXII. “Ferox gens nullam esse vitam sine armis rati.” These love death better than peace: the others love death better than war. There is no opinion which may not be maintained at the risk of life, the love of which seems so strong and so natural. [Montaigne, Book i., ch. 40. “Every opinion is strong enough to admit of its being supported at the price of life. Cato, when consul, having to secure certain towns in Spain to the empire, and having forbidden the inhabitants to bear arms, great numbers killed themselves. ‘Ferox gens nullam vitam rati sine armis esse,’ Tit. Livi, Book xxxiv., ch. 17.]

CXXIII. + Dogmatism is a bad supporter of truth.

+ Many certainties are contradicted.

+ Many falsehoods pass without contradiction.

+ Contradiction is no mark of falsehood, neither is the absence of contradiction a mark of truth.

CXXIV. + We do not become tired of eating and sleeping daily, for hunger and drowsiness are every day recurring; but for this, they would weary. So, without a hunger for spiritual things, they also would weary. “Hunger after righteousness.” (Beatitude 8th.)

CXXV. By chance, thoughts are produced; by chance, they are lost; there is no method for preserving or acquiring them. (Erased.)

— + A thought has lapsed; I wished to transcribe it. Instead of doing so, all I can write is, that it has lapsed. (Erased.)

CXXVI. In the act of writing down a thought, it sometimes escapes me; but this only reminds me of my weakness, which I am prone hourly to forget. This is as instructive to me as the recovery of my thought would be; for I ever desire to know my own nothingness.

CXXVII. + Reasons, effects.

+ Epictetus. Those who say you have a headache, [See No. CXXIX.].... it is not the same thing. We are certain of our good health, but not of our rectitude; and, in reality, his remark is absurd. (Vide inf. 87.)

+ And yet he believed he carried conviction with him in saying, it is either in our own power or not. But he did not perceive that it is not in our power to regulate the heart; and he was wrong in the conclusion he has come to respecting Christians.

CXXVIII. St. Augustin saw that men laboured after shadows at sea, in battle, &c. He was not acquainted with the rule by which certain writers prove that they ought to do this. Montagne has perceived that we are disgusted with a person of imperfect understanding, and that custom reconciles to everything; but he has not discovered the reason of this.

These persons have perceived effects, but not causes. They are, in comparison with those who have discovered the causes, like those who possess eyes only, in comparison with such as possess an understanding: for effects are in a measure perceptible by sense; but causes are discoverable only by the understanding. And although these effects are perceptible by the understanding, yet that kind of understanding is, in respect to the one which perceives causes also, like the corporeal in regard to the intellectual senses.

CXXIX. How is it that we see a cripple with unconcern, but a crippled mind disturbs us? It is because a lame man acknowledges that we walk straight, but a person of a'crippled mind maintains that it is we who limp; were it not for this, we should pity, but not be disturbed by him.

Epictetus asks, with more force, Why are we not displeased at being told we have a headache; and yet take it amiss to be told we reason badly, or make an erroneous choice? The reason is, we may be quite certain we have not a headache, as that we are not lame; but we may not be so sure that we have not come to a wrong conclusion upon a question. Thus, having no other ground of certainty than that we have perceived the matter in question in this manner, as plainly as seemed

to us possible; whereas another person has seen the direct opposite with equal plainness; we are by this means thrown into a state of embarrassment and surprise; and still more in this case, if many other persons ridicule our conclusion; for then we are compelled to set our own views against those of a multitude, which is ever venturesome and difficult. There can be no such conflict in regard to the testimony of the senses respecting the lame person.

Man is so constituted, that when often told he is a fool, he believes it; and when he often tells himself the same thing, he believes it also. We carry on a secret communion within ourselves, which requires to be carefully regulated; " Corrumpunt mores bonos colloquia prava."

We ought, as much as possible, to retire in silence within our own bosoms, and commune only with God, whom we know to be perfect Truth. In this way we best bring conviction home to ourselves.

CXXX. + Causes and results.

Rank: the people pay honour to persons of high birth. The half-informed despise them, contending that birth is a mere accidental advantage. The sensible respect them, not on the same ground as the common people, but from deeper views. ["La Pensée de Derrière." — See No. CXXXIII.] Devotees, possessing more zeal than knowledge, despise them, notwithstanding those considerations which procure them the respect of the wise; regarding them by a species of new light which their piety supplies: but mature Christians honour them, by a yet superior kind of light. [Written first, "by another and more recondite (intérieur) principle."]

Thus we see opinions maintained on one side or another, according to the degree of men's illumination.

CXXXI. + Causes and results.

It is true, then, that all the world lies under illusion; for even if the opinions of the people are sound, their own minds are not so; and they fancy truth to exist where it does not There may be truth in their opinions, but it is not at the point

where they suppose it to be. For instance, it is right to honour the aristocracy, but not because of any intrinsic advantage in birth, &c.

CXXXII. + Cause and results.

+ Continual overthrow of conflicting opinions.

+ We have then demonstrated the vanity of man by the esteem in which he holds things of no real importance. And thus all these opinions are overthrown. We have then shown that, vain as these opinions are, they have a solid foundation, and, therefore, the people are not so frivolous as is alleged. Thus, also, we have overthrown the opinion which tended to overthrow those of the people.

+ We must now, however, set ourselves to invalidate this latter position, and prove it to be still true, that the people are shallow, although their opinions have some degree of soundness; inasmuch as they are not conscious of the truth they contain; and, assigning such truth where it does not properly inhere, their opinions are, in reality, fallacious and unsound.

CXXXIII. + Cause and results.

We ought to have a kind of hidden thought, whereby to judge of everything; while we hold the same language as the people.

CXXXIV. + Cause and results.

+ Man’s weakness is the source of many interesting demonstrations; as we learn to play skilfully on an instrument.

+ It is an evil only through our weakness.

CXXXV. + Cause and effects.

Inclination and force are the origin of all our actions: inclination! of the voluntary; force! of the involuntary.

CXXXVI. + Greatness.

+ The habit of observing causes and effects shows the greatness of man, in dividing from his sensuality the ardour of his disposition. (See Thoughts, CLIV., CLXXXV., subs.)

CXXXVII. + Causes and results.

This is admirable! I am not to pay honour to a man clothed in brocade, and followed by seven or eight lackeys! Why, he may order pie to receive lashes if I do not salute him! His very garment speaks compulsion.

It is the same with a richly caparisoned horse, in comparison with another in plainer harness. Montagne amuses himself by professing not to see any difference; wonders how any one else can; and asks the reason. “ In truth,” he says, “how is it?” &c. [Montaigne, Book i., chap, on “Inequality of Condition,” has this remark:—” If you buy a horse, you take off his trappings, and examine him naked and stripped. Why do you, in estimating a man, look at hint made up and ornamented?” This is probably the passage which Pascal alludes to: there does not seem to be any one beginning in the way above stated, “ In truth, how is it?”]

CXXXVIII. Unbelievers are the most credulous of persons. They will believe the miracles of Vespasian, and not those of Moses!

CXXXIX. Atheists demand perfect demonstration of every thing: now it cannot be clearly proved that the soul is material.

CXL. Atheism indicates strength of mind, but only up to a certain point.

[It seems that Pascal, in this thought, had present to his mind the 3d ch of the 1st Book of a work now little known, which Charron has devoted to an “Apology for Religion.” It is earlier than that of “La Sagesse,” and is entitled, “Trois Livres pour la religion catholique, apostolique et romaine, contre tous athées, idolâtres, juifs, mahométans hérétiques, et schismatiques.” Paris 1602. Charron distinguishes three kinds of atheists; and speaking of those who absolutely deny a God, says that this kind of atheism “can exist only in an extremely bold and hardened mind.”

“Certainly,” he adds, “it seems to require as much or more boldness and hardihood of spirit to repel and resolutely strip ourselves of the fear and belief of a God, as to keep firm and constant hold of him. These are the two extremes, both rare and difficult, but the former the most so.”

The sentiment of Pascal corresponds with that of Charron, but with a certain restriction and limitation. Pascal had doubtless read Charron, and he quotes him in his notes for the preface to the first part of the "Apology for Christianity."

Further, this thought has been published by Desmolets, and after him by the Dijon editor. But they have both materially altered the autograph text, by substituting the word "manque de force," for "marque de force," which latter is plainly written in the MS.]

CXLI. The change of a man into a saint can only be effected by grace; whoever doubts this knows nothing of what a saint or a man really is.

CXLII. Men can be taught everything but virtue; and yet there is nothing that they pique themselves so much upon possessing as virtue. They are vain of just that very thing which they have never acquired.

CXLIII. + There are but two classes of men: the one, the just, who believe themselves to be sinners; the other, sinners, who believe themselves to be just.

CXLIV. + Half-hearted religionists are those who know the truth, but maintain it only so long as it falls in with their interests: after that they abandon it.

CXLV. + It is an evil to enjoy too much license.

+ It is an evil to have our wants too well supplied.

CXLVI. + The habit of pampering the body increases by little and little. The nourishment may be abundant, but the real benefit small.

CXLVII. + Memory is necessary for all the operations of the mind.

CXLVIII. + Instinct and reason are indications of different natures.

CXLIX. The arithmetical machine produces effects which approach nearer to thought than anything that animal nature can perform; but it is incapable of anything like will, such as is possessed by animals.

CL. + There is a total and essential difference between actions produced by the will, and every other description.

— The will is one of the principal organs of belief: not that it forms the belief; but that things are true or false according to the aspect under which they are regarded. The will, which determines our satisfaction to one thing rather than

another, prevents the mind from giving impartial consideration to the qualities of those to which it is not inclined; and thus, the mind coinciding with the will, contents itself with looking at the surface of what is preferred, and forming its judgment upon mere external appearances.

CLI. All our reasoning is wont to he subservient to feeling. But fancy is both similar and opposed to feeling; so that they cannot be distinguished from each other. One person says my feeling is fancy; another avers that his fancy is feeling. Now, there ought to be some rule: reason offers herself; but she is easily turned about in every way, and thus there is no rule at all.

CLII. + When I consider the brief term of my earthly existence, absorbed in an eternity, past and to come; the insignificant space that I occupy, and the narrow limit of my perception; — when I see myself to be surrounded with infinitudes, unconscious of my existence, and unknown of me; I ask with alarm and astonishment, "Wherefore am I here, rather than elsewhere? wherefore now, rather than at some other time? Who has placed me here? By whose order, by whose arrangement, have this spot and this period been assigned to my existence?"

(In the margin is, "Memoria hospitis unius diei prœtereuntis.")

+ How many kingdoms are there with which we are unacquainted?

+ I feel terrified at the eternal silence of this infinitude of space!

CLIII. + Why is my knowledge thus limited? Why my stature no more than this? my existence fixed at a hundred, and not a thousand years? What reason had nature to assign and choose that number rather than any other out of infinitude, when there was no reason for choosing one rather than another; and the one offered no ground of preference over the other?

CLIV. + Man's licentiousness has given rise to excellent rules of police, of morality, and justice.

But at best, this vile principle of human nature, this "figmentum malum" is only covered over; it is not eradicated.

CLV. By nature all men hate each other. Then-natural inclinations have been made, as far as possible, to subserve the general good; but this is only a feint, and a false show of charity. At bottom it is hatred still.

+ Yet is it a greatness in man, in his irregularities, to be able to derive from them so admirable a code of laws, and to exhibit in them, thus, a semblance of charity.

CLVI. + I have not toleration for those whom I see living so negligently in the faith, and so greatly abusing a privilege of which I think I should make a use so different. [This thought is in the copy only.]

CLVII. If it is a strange blindness, to live without inquiring what we are; it is a fearful one to live in sin, while we believe a God.

CLVIII. There are two things which instruct a man in everything relating to his nature, — instinct and experience.

CLIX. + We ought to know ourselves: if this does not enable us to discover truth, it serves to regulate our lives, and is, in itself, the highest wisdom.

CLX. A person once said to me, that she was accustomed to feel great joy and confidence after confession. Another told me, that she found her fears still continue. It struck me, that out of the experience of the two, a wholesome state of feeling might be formed, and that each was wanting in what might be gained from the other. The same thing happens often in other cases.

CLXI. + 1st degree: to be blamed for doing ill, and praised for well-doing.

+ 2d degree: to be neither praised nor blamed.

CLXII. + Every one believes he is all things to himself, for if he dies, all things die to him. Thence it arises that each one thinks himself all things to every one. We ought only to judge of nature by herself, not by ourselves.

CLXIII. The example of the magnanimous deaths of the Lacedemonians, and others, does not interest us, for what does it amount to? But the example of the martyrs' deaths does interest us; they are members of ourselves. We have a common bond with them; then-fortitude may inspire ours, not only by the force of example, but because it may perhaps have been the means of producing ours.

There is nothing of all this in the example of Pagans: we have no tie to them; just as we do not become rich by the wealth of a stranger, but may expect to do so by that of a father or a husband.

CLXIV. The indulgence of self-will never yields us peace, even if it procures us the full measure of our desires; but we have peace the instant we renounce it. Denying it, we can never be unhappy: indulging it, never happy. [This thought is not in the MS., but in the copy.]

CLXV. There is this in common in the lives of ordinary men and of saints, — that both aspire to happiness; and they differ only in the objects from which they expect it. Both the one and the other deem those their enemies who obstruct the attainment of their object.

We should make the will of God the rule by which to judge of good or evil, for it cannot be erroneous or undiscerning; and not our own will, which is ever full of error and obliquity. [This thought, which appeared first in the 4th edition of the "Pensées," (1678,) is neither in the MS. nor the copies.]

CLXVI. True virtue then, and that alone, consists in hating ourselves, — for sensuality makes us hateful; and in aspiring to a state of being which deserves our love. But as we cannot love that which is not part of ourselves, we must love something that shall be in, and yet not actually ourselves; and this is the case with every man. Now, it is the Infinite alone, that can form such an object as this. The kingdom of God is within us; the universal good is in ourselves, and yet is not ourselves.

CLXVII. + People in general have the power of dismissing from their thoughts what they choose. " Think not of the evidences of the Messiah," said the Jew to his son. It is the same also in our days. And thus, in the case of many, false systems of religion are perpetuated, and even true ones also.

+ But there are those who have not the power thus to dismiss reflection, but who think the more, the more they are forbidden to do so. These persons discard false systems, and true ones also, if they do not deem their evidences solid.

CLXVIII. When we desire to meditate upon God, do we not find something that distracts our thoughts, and turns them to other subjects? This is an evil, and it is one born with us.

CLXIX. All dissipating amusements are dangerous to a Christian life; but among the variety that the world has devised, none is more to be feared than theatrical representations. They are such natural and refined portraitures of the passions, that they serve to excite and awaken them in the bosom. This is especially the case with that of love; and chiefly when it is represented as chaste and honourable in its nature. The more innocent the emotion appears, to those who are themselves innocent, the more are they liable to be affected by it. Its fervour is agreeable to the natural disposition; we at once desire to experience feelings which we see so well represented; and thus, the conscience of the pure is satisfied by the propriety of the sentiments expressed; all fear is silenced; and we suppose that it can be no injury to purity to love with so much decorum and propriety. The theatre is quitted, with the heart full of the beauties and delights of passion, and the mind and conscience convinced of its innocence; and we are prepared to yield to the first impressions of so delightful a sentiment, or rather to seek occasions for a mutual flame; that we may experience the same pleasures, and even be exposed to the same vicissitudes, which we have seen so well depicted in the drama. [These reflections upon the theatre are not in the autograph MS., but they are in the copy. They were first published by Bossut, in 1779.]

CLXX. Men often mistake the imagination for the heart; and believe themselves converted when they have merely begun to reform.

CLXXI. + How far is the knowledge of God from the love of him!

CLXXII. + “Fascinatio nugacitatis.” That passion may not injure us, let us act as if we had but a week to live.

+ If we can give up a week, we can give up a life.

CLXXIII. + Superstition and concupiscence.

+ Scruples, unlawful desires.

+ False fear.

+ There is a fear, which does not spring from a belief in God, but from a doubt whether there be a God or not. Wholesome fear is produced by faith; a spurious one by scepticism: a sound fear unites itself with hope, and is the offspring of faith; for we place our hope in the God in whom we believe: an unsound one allies itself with despair; for we fear a God in whom we have no faith. The one fears to lose, the other to discover him.

CLXXIV. + The hope which Christians entertain of eternal happiness, is mingled with joy as well as with fear: they are not like those who hope for a kingdom of which they have never been the subjects; but their aspirations are for holiness, and freedom from corruption; — and of these things they have already had some experience.

CLXXV. The law does not destroy nature, but enlightens her; grace does not destroy the law, but brings it into exercise.

— The faith received at baptism is the source of all the life of the Christian, and of the converted.

CLXXVI. We may make an idol even of truth; for truth, apart from charity, is not God; it is his image, and a representation (une idole) which must not be loved, or adored: still less must we love or adore its opposite, which is falsehood.

CLXXVII. + I can be contented with entire obscurity; but if God appoints me a condition partially obscure, that very partial obscurity it is which dissatisfies me; and that, because I do not find in it the merit attaching to perfect seclusion. This is a fault, and shows that I make an idol of my obscurity, without looking to the appointment of God, which ought alone to be the object of my adoration.

CLXXVIII. + The waters of Babylon flow, and pass away, and draw us down with them.

— + O holy Sion! where all is abiding, and nothing passes away!

— + We should sit on the surface of the waters, not below, nor within, but above; not stand, but sit; for humility we should sit, and for safety we should be above them. But we shall stand in the courts of Jerusalem!

— + Let us mark whether this pleasure be abiding or pass away; if it pass away, it is a wave of Babylon.

CLXXIX. All that is in the world is “lust of the flesh, lust of the eye, or pride of life “libido sentiendi, libido sciendi, libido dominandi.” Unhappy earth, whose curse is to be devastated rather than watered by these waves of fire! Happy they who, on the surface of these streams, not engulfed by them, not carried down, but immoveably fixed, await in that secure and lowly posture the dawning rays of heavenly light; and, in calm repose, stretch out their hand to their Deliverer, that they may be placed firmly and for ever in the courts of the holy Jerusalem, where the pride of man shall never again oppose and overthrow them! They weep, but it is not to see the perishing things of sense swept away by the desolating stream; their tears flow at the thought of the country of their love, the heavenly Jerusalem, which a tedious exile has never effaced from their fond remembrances!

CLXXX. External observances.

+ There is nothing so dangerous as what is pleasing both to God and to man; for the states which are pleasing to God and man, have one quality which procures the favour of God, and another that of man, as is seen in the greatness of St. Theresa. That which pleases God is her deep humility under revelations; men admire her superior illuminations. And thus it is fatal to imitate such discourses as hers, in the belief that we are resembling also her holiness; and to suppose that, by such means, we are loving what God loves, and attaining to the state which secures his favour.

— + Better is it not to fast, and to be humble, than to fast and be self-righteous.

— + Pharisee, publican.

— + How useful would it be to me always to remember, that the same thing may equally injure or benefit me; and that all depends upon the blessing of God, which he bestows only upon what is done for his glory, and in conformity with his rules and designs. In this way, the manner may be as important as the thing itself,

and perhaps more so, since God can extract good out of evil; but without God we may extract only evil out of good.

— + Compare not thyself with others, but with Me. If thou find not Me in them, thou comparest thyself with abomination. If thou find Me in them, thou mayest make the comparison. But what is it that thou comparest? Is it thyself, or Me in thyself? If thyself, that also is abomination. If Me, thou comparest Me to Myself. I am God in all!

— + I speak to thee often, and give thee counsel, because thy conductor cannot speak to thee; for I will not suffer thee to be without a guide. And perhaps I do this in answer to his prayers; and thus he guides thee, unseen by thyself.

— + Thou wouldst not seek me, if thou didst not possess me. Therefore disquiet not thyself.

CLXXXI. + Every thing may prove fatal to us, even things formed for our service; as, in common things, a wall may kill us, or the steps of a staircase, if we do not walk uprightly.

— The smallest movement is influential upon the whole of nature; the entire sea is displaced by a stone. So, in grace, the minutest action may be followed by incalculable consequences. Thus, every thing has its importance.

+ In every thing we do, we should look, not only at the act itself, but at our own state, past, present, future, and that of others whom it may concern; and examine the connexion of all these things. Thus shall we preserve circumspection of conduct.

CLXXXII. + King, tyrant.

— + Thus shall I have also my internal and secret thoughts. [“Mes pensées de derrière la tête”] I shall be careful of every step I take.

— + Splendour of establishment. Deference attached to establishments.

— + The pleasure of greatness consists in the power of dispensing happiness, + The value of wealth is, that it should be dispensed liberally.

— + We should investigate the intrinsic value of all things. That of power is, to afford protection.

— + When force invades ceremonial observances; when a common soldier seizes the cap of a chief President, and throws it out of the window.....

CLXXXIII. + Are you less a slave for being loved and flattered by your master?

+ You are, at best, but a slave; your master flatters you; he will beat you presently.

CLXXXIV. + Perseus, King of Macedon. Paulus Emilius reproached him that he did not kill himself.

CLXXXV. + Nature varies and imitates; artifice imitates and varies. (Erased.)

CLXXXVI. + To write against those who render science too abstruse. Descartes. [This note, which is only found in the copy, ought to be annexed to the Thoughts, No. IX., his, page 195.]

CLXXXVII. + Since we cannot know all that is to be known of everything, we ought to know a little of every thing. For it is far better to acquire something of every thing, than everything in one branch of knowledge only: it is general information which is far the most pleasing. If we could have both, it would be all the better; but as we must choose between the two, we should decide for the latter; and this the world, which is in many things a good judge, sees and appreciates. [This thought is only entire in the copy. The autograph MS. contains only a small part of it, the paper on which it is written having been cut.]

CLXXXVIII. + Nothing shows more the vanity of man than the causes and effects of love: it revolutionizes the whole universe. [This note is only in the copy. It appears to refer to Thought, No. XC., preceding.]

CLXXXIX. My fancy leads me to dislike any one that makes a disagreeable noise in eating. How powerful is fancy! And what is it all for? Would you indulge such inclinations because they are natural. No; rather resist them.[Only in the copy. This again refers to No. CLI.]

Thoughts on the Jesuits and the Jansenists

Translated by George Pearce, 1849

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EDITORIAL NOTICES.
THOUGHTS ON THE JESUITS AND THE JANSENISTS.



Cornelius Jansen (1585–1638) was the Dutch Catholic Bishop of Ypres in Flanders and the father of the theological movement Jansenism.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.



THE FOLLOWING SECTION, in which we have collected a multitude of fragments and notes relating to the memorable contest in which Pascal engaged with the Jesuits, may properly be considered as an Appendix to the Provincial Letters.

The greater number of these fragments are extracted from the autograph MS. It was with a feeling of the liveliest curiosity that we traced, for the first time, these sketches of thought heretofore almost unknown; — these hasty suggestions and first inspirations of genius, soon about to be incorporated in the master-piece of our literature. Faithful to our design of preserving, with a religious care, the very minutest relic of this great mind, we have not scrupled, in the following pages, to present to the reader even the most rudimental of these sketches.

These notes possess, further, an historical interest; inasmuch as they prove that Pascal, in writing those letters, was not, as has been pretended by some, the mere instrument for carrying out the conceptions of others. They prove with what care he studied for himself the doctrines which he denounced: they sound in our ears, as it were, the first cries of his offended conscience against their enormities. The members of Port Royal, — especially Arnauld, — assisted him in his researches, made useful suggestions, and furnished some materials; and therefore it is that we find, among the fragments, a page of quotations in Arnauld's hand-writing, with annotations by Pascal. But if the latter found, in his communions with Port Royal, the occasion for his great work, and was supplied there with some of the documents that hé needed, his eloquence was the fruit of his own deep convictions, no less than of his immortal powers. (French Editor.)

The interesting remarks before cited almost supersede those topics, in reference to the papers now about to be furnished, which might have suggested

themselves to the mind of the Translator. We seem, indeed, by means of these notes, and yet more, perhaps, by the copious section which follows, entitled, “Thoughts and Notes for the Provincials,” brought into the workshop, or (if the figure be more appropriate) the laboratory of the mind; and admitted to the secret processes by which the materials of a great work are collected, and moulded into form and symmetry.

These collections furnish, also, a striking proof of the extent to which Pascal was accustomed to meditate upon the subjects on which his mind was engaged, up to the period when it kindled into elaborate composition. It is, at the same time, pleasing to consider, that his habit of committing to paper even the most imperfect of these reflections, has, (as was before remarked,) in some degree, compensated for the inability for more lengthened writing, which his increasing infirmities progressively induced.

We see here also an instance of the large amount of labour and care which this eminent writer bestowed upon his more finished compositions. It is by such means, indeed, and such only, that the master-pieces of literature have, at all times, been produced. There have been some gifted minds, which have, more than others, possessed the power of mental elaboration of their great conceptions, before they were given forth to the world; and their first thoughts have therefore required little subsequent improvement. Others, whether from inclination, habit, or an inaptitude for a continuous meditation, have produced their ideas — as the painter dashes off a hasty sketch — in a less digested state; and the perfection afterwards attained has been the result only of multiplied revisions. But, by whatever methods those fine compositions have been achieved, deep thought, and persevering labour, (however sedulously disguised, and unseen,) are the law of their production; and none who seek exemption from such law must ever hope for literary eminence. Whether by the silent process of meditation, or by often repeated correction, (the requisite mental power for the production of a great work being presupposed,) the minuter graces of composition have ever to he supplied, — the finer touches, the softer shades, and the richer hues, to be worked in, —

before it can be a candidate for general approval, and, still less, aspire to the suffrages of posterity. Time should be allowed, that the fondness for a first conception may subside; the rudeness of hasty thought must be redressed; the luxuriances of fancy pruned, redundancies corrected, harshness of diction softened down, expression heightened to brilliancy and point. It is needless to repeat here the numberless transcriptions to which, it is well known, the finest passages of Pascal's writings were subjected; for practices such as these, are, more or less, common to every great writer; nor is the labour ever intermitted, until the whole composition is brought into a state of purity and grace; and the high demands of taste and judgment are fully satisfied.

If there have been, indeed, exceptions to these rules, they have been found in those rare instances in which the affluence of the mind, and prodigality of the imaginative powers, have poured out their purer ore with so exhaustless an abundance, that mankind have, on that account, been willing to forgive its large mixture of debasing alloy. Yet who has not desired that even a Shakspere had been able, or disposed, to submit many portions of his immortal effusions to revision, at a period when judgment was more chastised, while feeling and imagination remained uncooled?

Language, like music, demands the union of a refined ear, a pure taste, and much mental effort, to form its richest combinations and bring out it§ highest powers. Ill-chosen words and disjointed periods may convey the desired meaning to an uncultivated reader, — as notes maybe strung together to amuse an unpractised ear. But the one is not to be dignified with the name of composition, or the other of harmony, when brought to the standard of judgment and taste.

We must not, however, forget that these accessories to a great work are not to be allowed to compensate for deficiency in the higher attributes of originality or strength. Who does not feel, that the choicest diction, and the smoothest style, are ineffectual to conceal poverty of thought, or failure of rhetorical force? Grace must be only the handmaid of knowledge, and felicity of language the plastic instrument of a high intelligence: judgment must maintain her authoritative seat;

while imagination, feeling, and enthusiasm inform and pervade the whole composition. It is only by the combination of these qualities, that perfection is attained, and the literary art is complete. It is when they meet and harmonize, in the sustained diction, the appropriate epithet, the unbroken metaphor, and the varied pause; — when the stately period is alternated by the terse suggestion, or abrupt interrogatory; — when attention is relieved by graceful description, lucid reasoning, or high argument; — and again, (if the elevation of the subject justify the transition,) when the mind is quickened and roused by vehemence and declamation, — by breathing thoughts, and burning words; — it is then, that the mighty instrument, by which man holds communion with man, is strung and pitched to its full powers, and rolls its rich tones and harmonies into the transfixed spirit: then the whole intellectual being is mastered and possessed; — taste is satisfied, the ear filled, imagination excited, passion inflamed the fastnesses of the judgment and conviction are stormed. The chaplet of immortality invests the work, and it floats triumphantly down the stream of time!

It is from the insufficient cultivation of these higher qualities of excellence, that mediocrity so much pervades the literature of a period, when all are readers, and almost all writers. It is not that gross defects prevail, — for this the diffusion of taste and intelligence precludes; but eminence is not aimed at. The surface spreads widely, but the depth is lost. The urgency of demand causes eagerness and haste in the supply. Men write for the day; and rarely look forward to the longevity of years, — never of centuries. The standard of taste is debased; and literature — from the loftiest of arts — tends downward to a mechanical craft, and a sordid speculation. There is, I well know, little of novelty, and there may be thought to be somewhat of querulousness, in such remarks as these.

And I am not forgetful of that caution which wisdom directs, against an exaggeration of the merits of the past, in a depreciating comparison of the present. Many circumstances, also, incident to a highly artificial state of society, almost necessitate the evils complained of. A fast increasing population, the importunity of physical wants, wide extending education, and the ceaseless opening up of

fresh topics of investigation, and new sources of intelligence; all these things keep the press in continual requisition, and multiply without limit ephemeral productions. But it is not to be denied, that it is by such means that the higher classes of literature become depressed. The works, which consume years in toil, and a life in meditation, meet with little encouragement. Statistics and calculations oppress the minds of men, wrestling to preserve a standing in life, or wrapt in the inextricable coil of speculation, or ambition: in their few moments of leisure, they resort with morbid eagerness (as the over-tasked body to fatal stimulants) to the pages of an unwholesome or unprincipled fiction: and thus, from this concurrence of causes, the purer efforts of imagination lose their interest; literary enthusiasm excites a smile; eloquence droops; and poetry dies!

It is not then inconsistent with a cheerful view of present advantages, or with the most sanguine hopes of the future, to desire and aim at a better state of things. Something may be done by recalling great models, and holding up a high standard. We see, from time to time, that the public yet know how to appreciate learning and eloquence, depth of research, and enlargement of views. When a Macaulay delivers the deathless annals of a great nation, thousands bend spell-bound over the manly eloquence of his glowing page. Neither is there any want of taste and feeling, to welcome again chaste creations of fancy, such as those which have slept, but not died, with the broken staff and buried wand of our modern Prospero; or to wander with delighted foot among the sweet haunts of the Muses (although they have been closed to us from a yet more remote period); —

> “Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill.”

All may do their part and endeavour, that refinement of the intellect may keep pace with the enlargement of its acquisitions; that the amenities of life may adorn and solace its labours; and that a graceful literature may fulfil its fitting vocation, of ennobling the sentiments, purifying the heart, and rectifying the principles.

To return, however, from this too-extended digression: — Collections such as these that follow, are, as far as I am aware, unknown in our literature. Our libraries possess curious variations of eminent works; and they can show manuscripts, which the student would not exchange for volumes embossed with gold, or clasped with diamonds. But repositories, such as these, of the raw material of thought, — heaps of ore, out of which ingots of the purest specimens of national eloquence have been fused, and drawn out, are wanting among our learned treasures. Its novelty may, therefore, perhaps justify the copiousness of the assemblage, which otherwise might have demanded some reduction; — and, indeed, after the enthusiastic expressions with which M. Faugère has introduced these papers, it would have been scarcely consistent with good taste, to deviate from the rule upon which he has acted, in suppressing no portion, however imperfect, of these Notes. In a subsequent part of the work, however, I may find it expedient to exercise somewhat of an editorial discretion, in a measure of curtailment of the ample materials of a similar description furnished by the French Editor; not altogether unmindful of the caution (although a somewhat fastidious one) offered by his learned contemporary, M. Cousin, against the production of a facsimile in the form of an edition. (Translator.)

THOUGHTS ON THE JESUITS AND THE JANSENISTS.



I. "STATE SUPER vias et interrogate de semitis antiquis, et ambulate in eis. Et dixerunt: Non ambulabimus, sed post cogitationem nostrum ibimus" They have said to the people, Come with us; follow the opinions of the new authors; reason shall he our guide; we shall he like others, who follow each their natural light. Philosophers have... [The passage breaks off here, and the whole is erased in the MS.]

All the various religions and sects have followed the guidance of natural reason. The Christian alone has submitted to rules imposed by another, and has conformed to those which Christ left behind him, to be transmitted to the faithful. Such a constraint was irksome to those worthy fathers: they wished for liberty to follow, like others, their own imaginations. In vain we cry to them, like the prophets of old time to the Jews, "Get you to the church; learn the laws of the ancients, and follow their paths." They reply, like the Jews, "We will not walk therein; we will follow the devices of our own heart." They have said, "We will be like others."

II. + They cannot acquire perpetuity, and they seek for universality; and, to gain this, they would corrupt the whole church, that they may he exalted to the rank of saints.

III. + Can it be from anything but a worldly spirit that you allow such matters to be probable? Would you impose this upon us as truth; and, if duelling had not been sanctioned by fashion, would you, looking at it dispassionately, lay it down as a probable opinion, that people might lawfully fight and kill each other?

3 [This figure 3, placed at the head of the page by Pascal, seems to show that this fragment was only the continuation of another passage, which has not been found. It is entirely in his hand-writing, and almost illegible. At the end of this

volume is a facsimile of page 100 of the MS., containing the second part of this fragment, now for the first time published entire. (French Editor.) This facsimile is given in the Provincial Letters. See Appendix. (Transl.)]

IV. + If they do not renounce the doctrine of probability, their good maxims have as little sanctity as their evil ones, for they are founded on mere human authority; and thus, if they are more just, they will be more conformable to reason; but not more really holy. They partake still of the wild stock upon which they are grafted.

— + If what I am stating does not serve to correct your errors, it will at least be useful to the public.

— + If these are silent, the stones will cry out.

— Silence is the greatest persecution. The saints are never silenced. It is true there should be a call; but it is not decrees of councils that should be studied, if any one be conscious of such a call. Our lessons ought to be on the necessity of bearing our testimony. Now, when Rome has spoken, and when we believe that she [In the MS. it stands he, which was meant by Pascal, no doubt, for the Pope. The whole of these notes are written with great rapidity.] has condemned the truth, and that this condemnation has been placed on record, and that the books which opposed it have been censured; we must raise our voices yet higher, in proportion as the censure is unjust, and it is sought to silence us with violence; till we succeed in finding a Pope who will listen with impartiality, and consult the voice of antiquity as his guide to justice.

— + Thus, while good Popes ever find the church complaining.

— The Inquisition and the Society, the two scourges of the Truth.

— + Why do they not charge you with Arianism? For they have said, that Jesus Christ is God; perhaps they mean, not by nature, but as it is said, " Dii estis V. If my letters are condemned at Rome, what I condemn in them is condemned in heaven! [Some of the following passages have been already given in the original French in the Appendix to the Provincial Letters. (Transl.)]

— + "Ad tuum, Domine Jesu, tribunal appelle."

— + You yourselves are accessible to corruption.

— Finding myself condemned, I might have feared that my writings were objectionable; but the example of so many other pious works satisfies me of the contrary. It is no longer permitted to write well.

— So corrupt, or so ignorant is the Inquisition!

— It is better to obey God than man.

— I fear nothing; I hope nothing. It is not so with the bishops. The Port Royal has its fears; and it is bad policy to disperse its members, [Allusion to threats, that were at that time held out, of breaking up the Port Royal Society.] for they will then have nothing to fear for themselves; and thus will become more formidable to others.

— + I fear not your personal censures, if they axe not supported by the authority of tradition.

— + Will you censure everything? What! even my respect for yourselves? No. Say then what is it? You do nothing, unless you designate what is objectionable, and why it is so; and nothing could have been easier than to do this.

VI. + You abuse the confidence of the people in the church, and make them dissemblers.

VII. + The world must be blind indeed, to believe you!

VIII. + People without sincerity, without faith, without honour, without truth, double-hearted, double-tongued; and, like the amphibious animal in the fable, half fish and half bird. (Erased.)

IX. + The Port Royal is as good as Voltigerod. In proportion as your procedure is just according to that standard, it is unjust by the rule of Christian piety.

X. It is important for kings and princes to be held in esteem for piety; and for this purpose they must take you for Confessors!

XI. + As often as the Jesuits succeed in taking the Pope by surprise, they will make all Christendom perjured.

— + The Pope is easily led into error through the multiplicity of his affairs, and his faith in the Jesuits; and the Jesuits have no difficulty in deceiving him, by

their doctrine of calumny. [Provincial Letters, XVIII.]

XII. + Universal.

+ Morals and languages are particular sciences, but universal in their nature.

XIII. + Probability.

— + The zeal of the saints in the pursuit of truth would be useless, if there were safety in probabilities.

+ The fear of the saints who had always sought the highest measure of certainty.

+ St Theresa having always obeyed her Confessor.

XIV. + Probable.

+ We may try our devotion to God, by comparing it with other things which we most regard.

+ It is probable that this food will not poison me.

+ It is probable that I shall not lose my suit by not urging it.

— + If it were true, that learned authors and their reasons were capable of settling these matters, I should then say, that they are not learned or reasonable. What! a husband may make a gain of his wife, according to Molina! Is the reason that he assigns satisfactory? or is the contrary so, which is assigned by Lessius?

XV. + Will you dare in this way to trifle with the king's edicts, by alleging that it is no duel, to go to the field for the purpose of meeting your antagonist?

— + So, the church has forbidden duelling, but not to walk abroad!

+ And thus usury, but not....

+ And simony, but not....

+ And revenge, but not.....

+ And the "quam primum," but not....

XVI. + Probab.

+ Their interpretation of safety is curious. After having proved that all their ways are safe, they have pronounced to be safe, not that way which leads to

heaven without danger of failure, but that which leads to it without danger of departing from that way.

XVII. + Probability.

+ Every one may add; none may take away.XVIII. Those who love the church, lament the corruption of morals; but they comfort themselves by reflecting that the laws remain. These men, however, corrupt the very laws themselves: the standard is destroyed.

XIX. + Montalte. [The feigned name under which the “Provincials” were published.]

Lax opinions are so universally acceptable, that it is surprising that those which they hold should excite disgust. It is, however, because they have exceeded in them all bounds. There are, besides, many who see what is right, although they cannot attain to it; but there are few who do not know that the purity of religion is opposed to our corruptions. They see the absurdity of supposing that an eternal reward is held out for Escobartan morals.

The easiest modes of living, according to worldly principles, are the most difficult, according to those of God: on the contrary, nothing is so difficult in the esteem of the world, as a life of religion; nothing more easy in the view of God. Nothing is more easy, according to the world, than to possess large concerns and abundant wealth; nothing is more difficult in God’s opinion, than to be immersed in such things, without imbibing a love for them, and being infected with their spirit.

XX. Take away “probability,” and you will never please the world; concede it, and you will never displease it.

XXI. The zeal of the saints in the discovery and practice of holiness would be fruitless, if probability were safe.

XXII. The Jansenists resemble heretics in the purity of their morals, [This is a striking, but indirect, testimony to those whom Pascal still continued to term “Heretics.” (Transl.)] but you resemble them only in their evil qualities.

XXIII. + “Probability.” They hold some true principles, but they abuse them. Now the abuse of truth should be as severely condemned as the propagation of falsehood.

+ As if they maintained that there were two hells; one for sinners against charity, the other for sinners against justice.

XXIV. + “Probable.”

+ If such flagitious reasons as these are “probable,” everything may be so: —

1st reason. “Dominas actum conjugalium” (Molin.)

2d reason. “Non potest compensari.” (Less.)

+ It is to oppose, not holy, but abomiable doctrines.

+ They reason like those who would prove night to be noonday.

+ Bauny, a burner of barns. [Provincial Letters, No. VIII.]

+ [Two words that are illegible.].... The Council of Trent for priests committing mortal sin; “ quam primum”...

XXV. + Casuists.

+ A considerable measure of alms-giving, a reasonable penance; although we cannot assign the just measure, we can see what is not such. It is amusing to see the Casuists pretend to fix it in the way they do!

— + People who accustom themselves to evil-speaking and evil-thinking.

— + The largeness of their numbers, so far from an evidence of their merits, proves the contrary.

— + The humility of one constitutes the pride of many.

XXVI. + They make the exception the rule. Did the ancient Fathers give absolution before penance? Do it, then, in the spirit of exception. But you make the exception your rule without exception; so that you do not allow that your rule admits of an exception.

XXVII. + Sinners without penitence; righteous men without charity; a God without power over the will of man; a predestination without mystery! [This thought occurs again further on, with some variation.]

XXVIII. + They give the reins to lust, but cherish scrupulosity: the very contrary should be their rule.

XXIX. + Generals.

+ They have not been content with introducing such morality into our temples; “templis inducere mores” They have not only claimed to be tolerated in the church, but, as if they deemed themselves the stronger party, they have sought to drive out all those who are....

— + Mohatra. One need be no theologian to be disgusted with it!

+ Who would have predicted of your Generals, that the time was at hand that they would prescribe these morals to the universal church, and would call resistance to these corruptions an act of war: “Tot et tanta mala pacem?”

XXX. + See their inconsistency! On one hand they say we must follow tradition, and they dare not disavow it; and on the other, they will affirm just what they please. We may certainly believe the first, as it will be the same thing to oppose, as not to believe them.

XXXI. + The servant knows not what his master does, for his master tells him only the act, but not its consequences; and thus he obeys servilely, and often sins in despite of the consequences. But Jesus Christ tells us consequences.

+ You violate these consequences.

XXXII. + “Probability” is necessary for other maxims, such as those respecting L’Ami, and the calumniator.

— + “A fructibus eorum;” judge of their faith by their morals.

— + “Probability” avails little without corrupt means, and means are nothing without “ probability.”

— + There is a satisfaction in the power and in the knowledge to do good; “ scire et posse grace and probability contribute to this satisfaction, for we may feel ourselves accountable to God, while we place reliance in their authorities.

XXXIII. + But is it probable that probability can satisfy?

Difference between ease of conscience and safety. Nothing produces safety but truth; nothing gives ease of conscience but a sincere endeavour to be virtuous.

XXXIV. + Annat. He forms a disciple without ignorance, and a master without presumption.

+ There is such a disproportion between the merit which he believes himself to possess and folly, that we can scarcely understand how he can so mistake himself.

+ The Jesuits.

XXXV. + The Jesuits desire to reconcile God and the world, and have gained nothing but contempt from both. In the light of conscience this is evidently perceived; and even, as regards the world, they are not good politicians. They possess power, as I have often said, but it is, so to say, power in respect of other religionists. “They have sufficient credit to get a chapel built, and appoint a mart for indulgences; not to procure the appointment of bishoprics, or fill up ecclesiastical offices. It is a sorry position that these monks hold in the world, even by their own confession. (P. Brisacier Benedictines.) Nevertheless.....you yield to those whom you see to be more powerful than yourselves; and oppress, with all the puny means you possess, such as are less conversant than you in worldly intrigue.

XXXVI. In corrupting the Bishops and the Sorbonne, if they have not the advantage of rendering their decision just, they have at least that of rendering their judges unjust. Thus, when the time shall come that they themselves shall be condemned, they will be able to plead “ad hominem” that the tribunal is unjust, and so they will demur to its decision. But this will avail them nothing. For as they cannot now conclude that the Jansenists are rightly condemned, merely from the fact of their condemnation, so will they not be able to conclude that themselves are unjustly condemned, because their judges are corrupt. Their sentence will be just, not because it is pronounced by judges of uniform integrity, but of integrity in that particular instance; which will be demonstrated by other means.

XXXVII. + Heretics, who fortify themselves by means of the corrupt doctrines of the Jesuits, ought to be informed that they are not those of the church....

.. the doctrine of the church, and our divisions yet leave us one altar.

XXXVIII. If, while differing among ourselves, we were to condemn, you would be right. Uniformity, without diversity, is useless to others; diversity, without uniformity, ruinous to ourselves. The one is injurious externally, the other internally.

XXXIX. + The casuists leave the decision of their questions to a corrupt reason, and the choice between those decisions to a corrupt will; so that everything that is most corrupt in man's nature takes part in their proceedings.

XL. + The whole body of their casuists cannot succeed in satisfying the conscience, while it is in error; and, therefore, it is most important to make choice of sound guides.

+ Thus they will be doubly culpable; both in following those courses which they ought not to have followed, and in listening to teachers to whom they ought not to have listened. [The last four paragraphs are from M. P. Guerrier's collection of MS.]

XLI. + As the two leading objects of the church are, the building up the piety of the faithful, and the conversion of heretics, we axe the more afflicted at the conspiracy which prevails in the present day for introducing errors, of all others, the most calculated to preclude the return of heretics into her bosom, and fatally to corrupt the few remaining pious and catholic members of our communion! The assaults at this time so openly made upon the great truths of religion, and such as are the most vital to our salvation, fill us not only with grief, but with alarm and dismay: because, independently of the resentment which all Christians should feel at these disorders, we are under especial obligation to seek remedies for them, and to employ the authority which God has committed to us, to see that the people entrusted to our charge, &c., &c.

XLII. + As the tranquillity of the state is chiefly to be valued for preserving in safety the possessions and privileges of the people, so the tranquillity of the church serves for securing the truth, which is her possession, the treasure nearest to her heart. And as no state ought to suffer, without opposition, the ravages of an enemy in her borders, from a mistaken unwillingness to interrupt tranquillity; and

peace is only just and valuable when it serves the purpose of securing our privileges; — it becomes unjust, and pernicious, when it leaves them exposed; and a war that is undertaken for their defence, is righteous and necessary. In the same way, when truth is violated, by the enemies of the faith seeking to undermine it in the hearts of believers, and to replace it with errors; — would it then be to serve the church, or to betray her, to remain in peace? Is it not, I ask, plain, that, as it is sinful to disturb peace, when truth is in the ascendant, it is equally so to continue in peace, when truth is subverted? There is a time when peace is fitting, and a time when it is unfitting. It is written, "There is a time for peace, and a time for war and it is for the interests of truth, duly to discern that time. But there is not a time for truth, and a time for error: on the contrary, it is written, that the truth of God remains ever sure; and therefore it is, that Christ, while he says he is come to give peace, says also, he is come to bring war into the world. But he says not that he is come to bring both truth and falsehood. Truth is then the first principle, and the great end of all things.

XLIII. + Those who have written such things in Latin, speak them in French.

+ The evil of putting them into French having been committed, it became necessary to do the good act of condemning them.

— + There is one heresy only, which is explained differently in the schools and in the world.

XLIV. + "Est et non est," — is this to be admitted as part of the same faith, as well as miracles... [Three or four words follow that are illegible]

— + When St. Xavier performs miracles...

— + St. Hilary. — + Unhappy persons! to compel us to talk of miracles. (Erased.)

Unjust judges! make not your laws for the occasion, but frame your decisions according to established precedents, and those even of your own.

"Vae! qui conditis leges iniquas."

— To weaken your adversaries, you dispossess the whole church of her arms.

— + Perpetual miracles, false.

— If they affirm that our salvation is from God, they are heretics.

If they say, they are obedient to the Pope, that is hypocrisy.

They are ready to subscribe all the decrees; that avails them not.

If they say, life may not be taken for an apple, they contravene catholic morality.

If miracles are wrought amongst them, that is no proof of purity of faith; but rather excites suspicion of heresy.

The obduracy of the Jesuits surpasses, then, that of the Jews, for they only condemned Christ, because they doubted that his miracles were wrought by a Divine power; while the Jesuits, although they do not doubt that the Port Royal miracles are from God, still condemn the brotherhood as guilty. [This passage, although there is some probability of its being Pascal's, is not to be found in the MS. autograph; nor in any other MS. which we have consulted.]

XLV. + Oppressors and persecutors of those who enjoy the visible protection of God.

— + When they upbraid your obliquities, they are heretics.

— + When they say the grace of Christ separates his people, they are heretics.

— + If they perform miracles, it is a proof of heresy.

— + It is said, (Ezekiel,) Behold the people of God that speak thus!

— + Hezekiah.

— + My reverend Father, all those things were figures. All other religions have perished; this will never perish.

Miracles are more important than you suppose; they have served for the foundation, and will be the preservation of the church, till Antichrist shall come, which will be the end of all things.

+ The two witnesses.

— + In the Old and New Testaments, miracles were wrought for the explanation of figures. They either concerned our salvation, or were useless, except to prove that we ought to submit ourselves to creatures. Figure of the sacrament.)!

— + The synagogue was a figure, and thus did not perish: it was no more than a figure, and therefore it has perished. It was a figure, containing in it truth; and therefore has subsisted till the time came when it contained truth no longer.

XLVI. + There have always been times when men have held the doctrine of the true God, and when the true God has revealed himself to men.

— + Two foundations; one internal, the other external; grace, miracles; all supernatural.

— + Unhappy men, to compel me thus to recur to the very foundations of religion!

— Sinners purified without repentance; the just justified without charity; Christians without the grace of Christ; God without power over the will of his creatures; a predestination without mystery; a redemption without certainty.

Miracles are no longer necessary, because we have them already. But when tradition is no longer listened to, when nothing is suggested but the Pope, — when he too has been circumvented; and when, having thus cast off the real sources of truth — tradition, and circumvented the Pope — its depositary, truth can no more be freely manifested: then it is that men, no longer speaking the truth, the truth itself must speak to men. This is what occurred in the time of Arius. mental. The following is the original, which is only attempted to be rendered literally:— “En l’ancien testament et au nouveau, les miracles sont fait pour l’affranchissement des figures. Salut ou chose inutile, sinon pour montrer qu’il faut se soumettre aux créatures. — Figure du sacrament.” (Transl.)

— + Miracles under Dioclesian and under Arius.

XLVII. The three marks of religion, perpetuity, holiness of life, miracles.

They subvert perpetuity by their “probability holiness, by their moral system; miracles, by destroying either their authority or their results.

+ If we are to believe them, the church has nothing more to do than to establish perpetuity, holiness, miracles.

Heretics contradict them, or deny the consequences: they do the same thing. + But they must either be without sincerity in the denial, or without rationality in

denying the consequences.

XLVIII. + Be this as it may, the church is left without evidences if they are in the right.

XLIX. + I suppose miracles will be believed.

— + You corrupt religion to favour your friends, or to prejudice your enemies. You make it the mere instrument of your will.

L. Perpetuity.

+ Is your character staked upon Escobar?

— + You have, perhaps, reasons for not condemning him; it might be sufficient for you to concur in what I am now addressing you respecting him.

— + Would the Pope be dishonoured by deriving his illumination from God and from tradition? and is it not dishonouring him to separate him from this holy union? [2d. Coll. MS, P. Guerrier.]

— + Tertullian; “nunquàm Ecclesia reformabitur — + Perpetuity.

— Molina.

— Novelty.

— + Heretics have always combated these three marks of authenticity, of which they are themselves not possessed.

LIII. + These are the results of the sin, both of the people and of the Jesuits: the great wished to be flattered; the Jesuits wished for the favour of the great. Both deserve to be abandoned to a spirit of falsehood; — the one for deceiving, the other for being deceived. They have been avaricious, ambitious, voluptuous: “ Coacervabunt sibi magistros LIV. + It is consistent in them to commit injustice, lest the Molinists should appear to have acted with justice. Thus they must not be spared; they are to have the credit of doing such things.

LV. It is right to hear both sides: that has been my case.

+ When we have heard only one side, we are apt to incline to it, and then the opposite side comes, and changes our view; but here the Jesuit confirms it.

— + Not what they say, but what they do; — + It is against me only they clamour; I am content. I know to whom I must render account.

— + Christ has ever been a “Rock of offence.”

— + Condemnable condemned.

LVI. + Policy.

+ We have found two obstacles in our endeavour to give men comfort: — the one, the internal rules of the Gospel; the other, the external laws of the state and of religion. Of the one, we are masters; with the other, this is the way we have dealt. “amplienda, restringenda, à majori ad minus.”

Junior.

LVII. +.... Let us treat them as mercifully as it is possible to do, holding the middle course between the love of truth and the dues of charity.

+ Piety does not consist in never opposing our fellow-men; it were very easy, &c., &c.

+ It is a false piety that would preserve peace at the expense of truth. It is also a false zeal to maintain truth by a violation of charity.

— + Thus they have herein no cause of complaint.

— + Their maxims have their time and their place.

— + Their vanity tends to raise them above their errors.

+ Resembling the pagans in their faults, and the martyrs in their punishment.

— + They had only to take the extract and disavow it.

— + “Sanctificum prœlium.”

— + Mons. Bourseys, can they not at least deny that he opposes the condemnation?

LVIII. + Jesus Christ never condemned without hearing. To Judas he said, “Amice, ad quid venisti?” To the guest without the wedding garment, the same, &c.

+ “Nisi videritis signa, non creditis he blames them, not for not believing without miracles, but for not being themselves the spectators of them. [MS. collection of P. Guerrier.]

LIX. + But it is impossible for God to be the end, if he be not the beginning.

+ They direct their eyes on high, but they build upon the sand; and the ground shall shake, and they shall fall while looking up to the heavens.

LX. + After so many marks of piety, they now possess that of persecution, the best of all.

LXI. + If St. Augustin were among us now, and carried as little weight as his defenders, he would be powerless. God dealt well with his church in sending him forth with suitable credentials.

LXII. + Truth is so obscured, and falsehood so rampant, in the present day, that it is charity alone that can recognize her.

LXIII. + If there was ever a period when we are justified in professing two opposite principles, it is when we are reproached with omitting one of them. The Jesuits and the Jansenists then are wrong in concealing them; but the Jansenists are the most so, for the Jesuits have succeeded best in professing both.

LXIV. + The five propositions condemned — no miracle in that, for truth was not attacked. But the Sorbonne, — the Bull....

LXV. — + It is impossible that those who love God with their whole heart can undervalue the church, so strong are her evidences.

LXVI. These females, [The Nuns of Port Royal. See Provincial Letters, No. XVI.] overwhelmed with astonishment at finding it stated that they were in the high-way to perdition; that their Confessors were leading them to Geneva; and inculcating the belief that Christ was not present in the Eucharist, nor at the right hand of the Father; — knowing the falsehood of these allegations, they committed themselves to God in the spirit of the Psalmist: “Vide si via iniquitatis in me est” What was the consequence? That place of theirs which had been called the Temple of Satan, God made his own sanctuary. It was declared that children ought to be removed from their domicile; God made it the scene of their recovery from disease. Their dwelling was said to be the “Arsenal of Hell God distinguished it as the repository of his graces. Finally, they were menaced with all the wrath and all the vengeance of heaven; and, lo! God has overwhelmed them with his favours.

He must be bereft of sense and reason who can believe such persons to be in the way to perdition.

LXVII. + The five propositions were equivocal; they are so no longer.

LXVIII. + Happy he who is condemned on the authority of Escobar!

+ You will charge me in vain with traducing Escobar, for he is too well known.

LXIX. + To the heart of man it is a matter of indifference whether there be three or four Persons in the Trinity; but not, &c., &c. Thence it is that they are eager to sustain the one, and not the other.

+ It is well to do the one, but the other must not be omitted. God has equally declared, &c., &c.

+ Thus, he who believes only the one and not the other, does not believe it because God has revealed it, but because his own inclinations do not lead him to deny it; and he is willing to assent, and thus satisfy in an easy manner his conscience by bearing a cheap testimony, &c., &c.....

+ Yet is it a false testimony.

LXX. + It is the extravagant idea you have conceived of the importance of your society, that has led you to put forth these atrocious maxims. It is evident that this is your method in regard to calumny, for you stigmatize in me as scandalous, the very same kind of misrepresentations, which, in your own case, you justify. Why?

Because you regard me as a mere individual, but yourselves as — Imago. [Allusion to a work intended as an apology for the Society: “Imago primi seculi.” Pascal speaks of this book in the commencement of his 5th Provincial.]

— + It is clear that your praises are follies, by the foolish..... as the privilege of “non damné.”

— + Do you deem it calculated to encourage your children to condemn them when they are seeking to serve the church?

— + It is a device of Satan to divert into other fields the arms with which those persons are combating heresy.

— + Your policy is bad.

— + What says St. Paul? Does he adduce the testimony of prophecies at all times? No; but miracles.

— + What says Jesus Christ? Does he bring forward prophecies? No; his own death had not yet fulfilled them; but he says, “si non fecissem believe the works.

— + “Si non fecissem quœ alius non fecit.”

— + Abraham, Gideon, were confirmed in their faith, through miracles.

— + Two supernatural foundations of our faith, which is wholly supernatural; the one visible, the other invisible.

— + Miracles with grace, miracles without grace.

— + The synagogue, which has been regarded with satisfaction as a figure of the church, and with dislike as being nothing more than a figure, has been restored, being ready to fall when it was an object of Divine favour, and yet only a figure.

Miracles prove the power of God over the heart, by that which he exercises over the body.

+ The church has never allowed of miracles among heretics.

— + Miracles the support of religion. They distinguished the Jews from other nations; and now they, in the same way, distinguish the Christians, saints, the innocent in life, true believers.

— A miracle among schismatics is not a thing to fear; for the schism, which is more palpable even than the miracle, plainly marks their error. But when there is no schism, and the error is the question in dispute, then the miracle makes the distinction.

— + Judith. God makes himself heard at last in the midst of these later oppressions.

+ If the decay of charity leaves the church almost without true worshippers, miracles will serve to revive it.

+ It is one of the last effects of grace.

— + O, could a miracle be wrought upon the Jesuits!

— + When a miracle disappoints the expectations of those among whom it is wrought, and there is a disproportion between the state of their faith and the efficacy of the miracle, then a change must be made. But with you it is otherwise: there would be as good reason to say that if the Eucharist raised a body from death, you must become a Calvinist, as remain a Catholic.

+ But when it fulfils their expectation, and those who were looking for the blessing of God upon the remedies, find themselves cured without the use of remedies...

+ Impious! Never was a miracle wrought by the power of the devil, without a more signal one being wrought on God's part; at least without a prediction that such would be the case.

On the miracle. [That is, the miracle wrought at Port Royal, on Pascal's niece, by the touch of the holy thorn. (The incident will be found in some of the popular Memoirs of Pascal.) The above few notes and memoranda relating to it are peculiarly obscure; but I have thought it right to give them as nearly as possible as they stand in the original. (Transl.)]

+ As God never rendered a family more happy, so has he never found one more grateful.

+ I have read them again since, for I did not know them.....

THE END

+ Are we safe: is the principle sure? Let us examine. Our own testimony goes for nothing. St. Thomas.

+ Will that person scoff at the other? Who ought to scoff? Yet this one scoffs not, but pities him.

+ They seek concealment in a throng, and call in numbers to their aid. Tumult.

——— ——— —

Thoughts and Notes for the Provincial Letters



Translated by George Pearce, 1849

[All these Thoughts and Notes are published for the first time, although not preceded by the mark +. TRANSLATOR]

I.

Letter upon the compulsory establishment of the Jesuits everywhere.

— Preternatural blindness.

— This system of morals, which has in its front a crucified God!

— Behold the men to whom they have taken a vow of obedience: “tanquam Christo!”

— The decline of the Jesuits.

— Our religion which is wholly divine.

— A Casuist, a mirror.

If you approve it, it is his testimony.

— It is strange that there are no means of conveying to them an idea of religion.

— A crucified God.

— As to the multitude of the Casuists, so far from being a ground of reproach against the Church, it is rather a cause of grief to the church.

— And that we may not be suspicious, like the Jews, who carry their books without suspicion to the Gentiles, they bring us their Constitutions.

— In.....this affair..... they are... [Several words illegible in the MS.]

— But what a contrast! Their disciples love and cherish corruption: their adversaries abhor it.

* * * *

As for us, we could not lay down any «general rules. If you look at our Constitutions, you will scarcely be able to recognize us; they make us mendicants, and enemies of courts, and yet... &c. — But it is no infringement of them, for the glory of God is everywhere.....

There are various ways of proceeding. St. Ignacius took one; and now others are in fashion. It was best at the outset to prescribe poverty and retirement: further objects were more advantageously postponed to the future. It would have excited alarm to begin at too high a pitch: it would have been unnatural.

Not that the general rule was not to conform to the institutes; for they might be abused. Few would be found able, like ourselves, to bear elevation without vanity.

— Two obstacles, — the Gospel, and the laws of the state. "A majori ad minus." Junior.

— The Jansenists bear the penalty.

— God evidently protects us against rash judgments, and groundless scruples.

— All the truth on one side: we extend it to both.

(On this page of the MS. are references to various authors, such as Père St. Jure, Escobar, Aquaviva, Clement et Paul, &c.)

The tip of a hood sets up in arms twenty-five thousand monks.

II.

Pascal's Notes.

To bring all the Fathers into conformity with his fancies, rather than conform his opinions to those of the Fathers.

Modesty.

The mass. I know not what he says.

Policy.

Unluckily, or rather by a singular good fortune, whatever is done by one member of the society is attributed to all.

To obey, scrupulously, the bishops; that we may not appear to affect any rivalry of them, like St. Xavier.

Wills. Suits.

They make additions — they invent even false narratives.

Failure in inflicting punishment upon slanderers.

Lest the society should corrupt itself.

Failure of obedience in promoting their reputation.

Failure of obedience in seeking the support of the great.

They commit enormities, and such as are quite foreign to the principles of the society, alleging that persons of high station importune them to do so; whereas it is they that are the solicitors, insomuch as they know they must either make such persons their enemies by refusal, or corrupt the Society by yielding to their wishes.

Chastity.

Poverty. Relaxed opinions opposed to truth.

Vines, &c.

III.

— Have you a proper idea of our society?

— The church has subsisted so long without these questions.

— The others do it, but not in the same manner.

— What comparison is there, do you suppose, between twenty thousand individuals, and two hundred thousand members, who would all perish for each other? A body possessed of immortality.

— We will maintain ourselves till death. Lama.

— We urge our opponents. M. Puys.

— Everything depends upon probability.

— The world naturally likes some kind of religion, but an accommodating one. [In the margin, Kings, Pope, 3 Reg. 246.]

— He has a mind that I should show it you by a strange supposition. I will then state.....

Did not God, by his special providence, sustain us for the benefit of the church, I could prove to you that, humanly speaking only, we cannot perish.

— Grant me this principle, and I will prove to you the whole. It is, that the society and the church are involved in a common destiny. Without this nothing can be done.

— Persons do not continue long in a state of open profligacy, nor are they naturally disposed to the practice of great austerities. An accommodating religion is fittest for duration.

They court them by licentiousness.

— For individuals who do not aspire to rule by force of arms, I know no better methods.

Rectitude and good faith in devotion.

452. Kings, nursing-mothers.

4, Hatred on account of their merit.

Apel. Universe. 159. Decree of Sorbonne.

Kings. 241.

228.

Jesuits hung. 112.

Religion and science.

— "Jesuit a omnis homo."

— Colleges, relatives, friends, children, to be chosen.

Constitutions.

253. Poverty, ambition.

257. Chiefly princes and noblemen, who can both injure and benefit.

12. Useless things rejected. Good address, riches, nobility, &c. What! Were you afraid that they would not be earlier admitted?

27.

47. To give his property to the society for the glory of God. Dec. [These are the Declarations of the Generals of the Order, which have the same force as the Constitutions. (French Editor.)

The figures in the margin, and elsewhere, obviously refer to passages in various Jesuit works. (Transl.)]

51, 52. Harmony of views. Decl.: To submit to the society, and thus secure uniformity. But in the present day this uniformity consists in differences, for so the society determines.

117. Const.: The Gospel and St. Thomas. Decl.: some accommodating kind of theology.

65. The learned and scientific seldom pious; but now their opinion is changed.

23. 74. Falsehood.

19. To yield nothing to relatives, and rest satisfied with the advisers appointed by the Superior.

1. Not to practise examination. Decl.

2. Entire poverty: no masses. Neither for sermon, nor by alms; compensation.

4. Decl equally binding with the Cons. (end); read the Const every month.

149. The Declarations spoil all.

154. Not to excite to continual alms-giving, nor demand them as matter of justice, nor charity-box.

Decl "Non tanquam Eleemosina."

200. 4.....warned of everything.

190. Const requires not.....interpreted.

— By our religion we should be all rich, without our Constitution. Therefore we are poor.

— And by means of a true religion, and even without it, we are powerful.

Cle. [Two words illegible.]...

Our Generals are apprehensive of injury, through our external occupations. 208. 152. 150.

On account of the court. 209. 208. 216. 218.

Because they might not follow the safest and the most authoritative opinions, St. Thomas, &c. 215. 218.

"Stipendium contra Constit." 218.

Females. 225. 228.

Princes of policy. 227. 168. 177.

Probability, 279.

Novelty, 156.

To beguile time and amuse themselves, rather than promote man's salvation, 158.

Relaxed opinions. 160.

Mortal and venial sin.

Contrition, 162.

Policy. 162.

... 162. 182.

The enjoyments of life are on the increase among the Jesuits. 166.

Apparent and false advantages which deceive them. 192. ad.

Complaints of the Generals. None of St. Ignace. None of Laynez; some of Borgia and Aquaviva. Multitude of Mutius, &c.

P. Lemoine: 10,000 crowns out of his province.

See the imperfection of man's foresight! All those things from which our earlier leaders apprehended injury to our society, are those by which she has been strengthened, — high patronage, the inconsistency of our Constitutions, multitude of orders, diversity and novelty of opinions, &c.

Policy. 181.

The early spirit of the Society extinct, 184 ad 189. — 170, 171 ad 174.

"Non e pià quella." Vitelescus. 180.

* * * * *

To refer to personal vices.

— Beautiful letter of Aquaviva, 18 June, 1611, against probable opinions.

St, Augustin. 282.

— And as to St. Thomas, the parts in which he has expressly treated of these things.

"Climaq pour l"..... 277.

And novelties.

And it is no excuse for the Superiors to allege that they were ignorant, for they ought to have known. 279-194-192.

— As to morality, 283.

288.

— Aquoquiez confessed females.

— The Society placed to the account of the church, for good and for evil. 236.156.

IV.

To examine the motives of the censure by the phenomena.

To form an hypothesis which should serve to...

— The habit forms the doctrine.

— You confess multitudes who confess only once a year. (Erased.)

— I considered that he held one opinion to balance another. (Erased.)

— When we are so hardened as to have lost all remorse, we do not., — ..[Two words illegible.] (Erased.)

You persecute M. Arnaud [Pascal's habit was to write Arnaud, instead of Arnauld.] then, without remorse. (Erased.)

— I suspect this doctrine, for it appears to me too mild for the malignity which they impart to me.

I am suspicious of their union, on account of their individual contrarieties. I shall wait till they agree, before I take any part. For one friend, I should make many enemies. I am not learned enough to controvert them.

— Why, would you not select some great heresy? (Erased.)

— The wagerer. (Erased.)

I supposed we might be condemned for having never had good thoughts; but to believe that no one hasany, is to me certainly a novelty. [This passage will be found almost literally in the 4th Provincial] (Erased.)

— What is the object of this? To console the righteous, and to save the despairing? No; for no one can tell whether they be righteous or not.

— M. Chamillard would be a heretic, which is manifestly untrue, for he has written in favour of M. Arnaud. (Erased.)

— Those who think they do well in committing sin. (Erased.)

— In the year 1647, all might yet agree; in 1650 it was more difficult, &c.

— Luther, everything, but true.

— If there had not been in the church any similar instance, but herein I trust to my curate!

— There is only one who speaks the truth.

— However little inconvenience it may cause, they produce from it more grace, for they dispose of it as of their own.

— For every several occasion! a distinct species of grace, — grace for the great, grace for the commonalty. (Erased.)

— At last M. Chamillard has approached so near, that if there are degrees by which we may arrive at nullity, this “suffisante grâce” is now the nearest to it.

Amazing, to be a heretic for that! (Erased.)

— Every one was surprised at this, for as it has never been discovered in the Scriptures, or the Fathers, &c.

— How long, my father, has this been an article of faith? It can be, at most, only since the invention of the terms, “pouvoir prochain;” and I should think this heresy was contemporary with his birth, and he was born for this one object only. [1st Provincial Letter]

— The censure merely forbids this way of speaking of St. Peter; nothing more. (Erased.)

— I am under great obligation to them... (Erased.)

— They are adroit folks; they were fearful that these letters written to the provincials.....(Erased.)

— It is not the punishment for a word. (Erased.)

— The colourings have wronged me.

— The same proposition shall be good in one writer, and objectionable in another. Yes; but there are, then, other bad propositions.

— There are some who defer to the censure; others, to the reasons assigned; — all, to reasons of some description or other. [2nd Provincial Letter] I am surprised that you have not with you the general, rather than the individual approval; or at least, that you have not united them.

— How am I consoled! No Frenchman is a good Catholic.

— The.... Clement VIII. — Paul V. — Censure.

God evidently protects us.

— How small is man's capacity! He cannot even form a worm.

— Instead of.... grace to proceed thither.

— Multitude of graces.

— Jansenist interpreters.

— St. Augustin has the most, on account of the dissentions of his opponents. Besides one thing which we may consider as an uninterrupted tradition of twelve thousand Popes, councils, &c. (Erased.)

— M. Arnaud's opinions must certainly be very unfortunate, that they should infect all who are connected with him.

— The censure will render them this service, — that, when condemned, they will defend themselves by alleging that they follow the Jansenists.

V.

Diana.

That is very useful to us. (Erased.)

It is lawful not to confer benefices without a charge of souls to the most deserving. The Council of Trent seems to lay down the contrary; but thus it is proved, If this were so, all the bishops would be lost, for they have all done the same thing. (11.)

The King and the Pope are not bound to promote the most deserving. If it were otherwise, they would both incur a terrible responsibility. (11.)

And again, — If this opinion were not sound, penitents and their Confessors would have much to do; and therefore I hold, that in practice it must be followed. (21.)

And in another place, where he lays down the conditions for constituting a sin mortal, he brings together so many circumstances that scarcely any can commit mortal sin; and having established this, he exclaims, “How light and easy is the Lord’s yoke!” (22.)

And elsewhere: “We are not obliged to give alms of our superfluity in the ordinary necessities of the poor; if it were otherwise, we should condemn the greater part of rich persons and their Confessors.” (11.)

These sophistries tried my patience, and I said to the father, “But what prevents our saying that they are so?”

“This has been provided for in the same passage,” he replied, “ where, after it is said, — If that were true, the richest persons would be damned:” he adds, “To this Arragonius replies that they are so; and Baunez further declares that their Confessors are equally so: but I reply with Valentia, another Jesuit, and other writers, that there are various excuses to be made for the rich and their Confessors.” (22.)

I was delighted with this reasoning, when he concluded by saying, “If this opinion in regard to restitution were just, how many restitutions would be required!”

“My good father,” I said, “your reasons are excellent!”— “Ah!” he replied, “he is indeed an indulgent person!”— “I see plainly,” I rejoined, “that without you casuists, all the world would be damned! How wide have you made the road to Heaven! O, how many will now be able to find it! Here is one.....”

VI.

What have you gained by accusing me of jesting at sacred things? As little will you gain by your charges of misrepresentation. (Erased.)

— I have not revealed the whole; this you will soon perceive. (Erased.)

— I am no heretic; I have not maintained the five propositions. You assert it, but without proof. I affirm that you have said thus, and I prove it.[ln the margin is, "Ex Senatusconsultis et plebiscite. Demander des passages pareils."]

— Do you threaten me?

— I tell you, you are impostors. I prove it; and you do not deny, but rather, insolently avow the fact. — Brisacier, Minier, D'Alby.

— When you considered M. Puys an enemy to the Society, he was a bad pastor, — ignorant, heretical, of evil faith and conversation. Now he is an excellent pastor, — pure in faith and morals!

— As you have arraigned only this point, it follows that you assent to all the rest.

— To calumniate, "haec est magna cœcitas cordis."

Not to see its criminality, "haec est major cœciias cordis."

To justify, rather than confess it as a crime, "haec tunc hominem concludit profunditas iniquitatis" &c. — 2. 30. Prosper.

— Persons of high station take their different sides in civil wars; so do you in the civil war of man.

— I wish to assert these things to your face, that they may come with more force. (Erased.)

— I am sure of the approbation of those who examine books for themselves. But those who only look at the title-pages, — and they are the most numerous, — such persons may rely on your word, not supposing that religious professors could be guilty of imposition.

.. (Erased.)

— Not that I do not perceive how much you are embarrassed. For if you were willing to retract, that would be completed, but, &c. (Erased.)

— Saints refine in the scrutiny of their conduct, in order to discover cause of blame in themselves, and charge their best actions with guilt. But these practise refinements to excuse the most culpable.

— A building fair to the eye, but upon a weak foundation; such the heathen sages erected; and the devil deceives men by this appearance of solidity, where the foundation is the most unsound.

— Never had any one so good a cause as I; and never have any furnished so good a mark as yourselves.

— People of the world do not believe themselves to be in the right way.

— Do not flatter yourselves that this matter shall remain in dispute; we will have your works, complete and entire, published in French, and then all the world shall judge for themselves.

— I beg every one will do me the justice not to believe them any longer on their own word.

— The more they regard me as weak, individually, the more authority they contribute to my cause.

— You say I am a heretic. Is that decent? If you are not afraid that I shall receive justice from man, have you no fear of the retribution of God?

— You shall feel the force of truth, and bow to it!

— You would compel the world to believe you, on pain of mortal sin.

— It is sinful to give a hasty belief to slander. (“Non credebitur temerè calumniatori.” St. Aug.) (“Fecitque cadendo undique me cadere,” by the maxims of slander.)

— There is something supernatural in such blindness. “Digna nécessitas.”

—” Mentiris impudentissime.”

— 230. The extremity of guilt is to defend it. Elidere.

— 340. 23. The good fortune of the wicked.

—” Doctrinâ sua noscitur vir.”

— 66. “Labor mendacii.”

— Simulated piety, a double crime.

— Am I alone against thirty thousand? No. Do you keep possession of the court, and entrench yourselves in imposture: my support be truth! There is all my strength: if I lose that, I am lost indeed! I shall have no lack of charges, and persecution. But truth is on my side; and we will see which of us shall prevail!

I am an unworthy defender of religion; but you are also unworthy defenders of error and injustice. May God, in his mercy, disregarding what is evil in me, and looking complacently upon what is good in you, grant us both his grace, that truth may not suffer in my hands, and that falsehood may not.....[These words finish page 398 in the MS. The sentence was doubtless continued on another page, which is lost.]

VII.

And they set themselves to chase away from the church those who refuse to make this acknowledgment; in v (Erased.)...

Every one declares they are so. [The Five Propositions are no doubt meant The beginning of this fragment is wanting in the MS.]

M. Arnaud and his friends protest they condemn them in themselves, and wherever found: if they are in Jansenius, they condemn them; if not there, provided the heretical meaning condemned by the Pope in these propositions be in Jansenius, then he condemns Jansenius.

But you are not satisfied with these protestations; you require him to admit that the propositions are word for word in Jansenius. He replied, he cannot affirm this, not knowing whether they be so or not; that he has looked for them, as well as a multitude of others, without being able to find them. They have entreated you, and all your party, to furnish them with the passages in which they are contained: no one has done so. And yet you would, on the ground of this refusal, cut him off from the church — although he condemns all that she condemns — for this sole reason, that he does not affirm certain words, or a certain meaning, to be contained in a book, in which he has never found them, nor will any one point

them out to him. Truly, my father, so futile is this pretext, that the church, perhaps, never exhibited a proceeding so remarkable, so unjust, and so precipitate, that...[The remainder is wanting in the MS.]

The church may well compel... (Erased.)

— It is not necessary to be a theologian, to perceive that their heresy consists only in their opposition to yourselves. I experience the same thing myself, and it will be the experience of all who have ventured to attack you.

The Curates of Rouen, Jansenists.

You deem your objects so just, that you make them matter of prayer!

Two years ago their heresy consisted in the Bull; last year it was the internal meaning; for these six months past it has been in the " totidem;" now it is in the interpretation.

— Do I not plainly see that you are determined to bring them in heretics? — St. Sacrament.

— I have embroiled myself in taking up the cause of others.

— You are supremely ridiculous in the clamour you make about these propositions. It is all for nothing.

They must be made to listen.

— .... Without the names of the authors; but as they saw through your design, seventy were found to oppose you.

— To date the decree.

— In order that the man whom you could not convict of heresy on his own words, &c.

— that all these statements, even the most horrible, should proceed from your authors! (Erased.)

— For every one knows.

— Have you no other reply, and no better proof than this? (Erased.)

— Whether he know, or do not know, or be in doubt; whether a sinner or a heretic.

— That illumination which reveals to us truths that lie beyond our understanding, reveals them free from error, whereas.....

— As for me, I would rather be unjustly, &c...

(Erased.)

— A band of reprobates.

— All the boxes of St. Mary might be opened without proving you less innocent. (Erased.)

— What is your reason for this? You say I am a Jansenist; that the Port Royal maintains the Five Propositions; and therefore I maintain them. Here are three falsehoods.

— I beg you will not pretend to say, it is not you who have caused all this to be done. Spare me the necessity of a reply; it would be such as would not be agreeable to yourselves, or to others. (Erased.)

— There are two things which the Pope has not condemned: he has condemned only the interpretation of the Five Propositions. Will you say he has not condemned it? But the meaning of Jansenius is included in it, says the Pope. I see plainly the Pope supposes this, because of your “totidem.” But he has not said this, under pain of excommunication.

How could he, and the bishops of France, do otherwise than believe this? You had pronounced your “totidem,” and they little knew that you were capable of affirming such a thing to be the fact, when it was in reality not so! Impostors that you are! They had not seen my fifteenth Letter.

— How could the meaning of Jansenius be in the propositions, when they are none of his?

Either the matter in question is in Jansenius, or not. If it is there, that condemns it; if not, for what is he to be condemned?

Let them condemn one of your propositions in Escobar. I will take in one hand Escobar, in the other the Censure, and produce a formal argument from the two.

VIII.

On hearing the report of the Feuillants [A religious order]....

I communicated it to an old friend of mine: speaking of devotion he fancied that I held some sentiments of the same kind, and might become a Feuillant myself.

And that I might do some service as a writer — especially in these times — against modern innovations. fait, lately against your Chapter-General, which is that they should subscribe the Bull.

That he could wish that God might aid me with his inspirations.

Father, must he subscribe?

"It is obvious," said the Feuillant, "that the point is not so clear, for controversy indicates doubt."

St. Athanasius, St. Chrysostom. Morality, infidels.

— The Jesuits have not succeeded in rendering truth doubtful, but they have left no doubt of their impiety.

Contradictions have ever existed, to perplex the wicked.

Everything that offends truth or charity, is evil. This is an undoubted axiom.

IX.

Notes for a Nineteenth Provincial.

— The day of judgment.

— This then, my father, is what you call the meaning of Jansenius; this is what you palm off as such, both to the Pope and the bishops.

— If the Jesuits were corrupt, and it were true that we stood alone, the more reason have we to remain as we are.

—" Quod helium firmavit, pax ficta non auferat."

—" Neque benedictione, neque maledictione movetur, sicut angelus domini."

— They attack the greatest of Christian principles, which is the love of truth.

— If the signature bears this meaning, let them suffer us to explain it, that there may be no ambiguity; for it cannot be doubted that many believe the

signature to imply a consent.

— We are not blameable for not believing; but we should be blameable to swear without believing.

— But you may be deceived? I swear that I believe I may be deceived: but I do not swear that I believe I am deceived.

— If the “rapporteur” were not to sign, the decree would be invalid; if the Bull were not signed, it would be good; it is not then....

— That puts them in the ascendant with Escobar; but they do not take it thus: and evincing their concern to find themselves in a conflict between God and the Pope — I am grieved to be obliged to tell you all this: I give a simple narrative.

Isolated Note. (page no. MS. aut.)

We ought, my father, to judge Divine ordinances with sobriety.[This is almost identical with the title of Ch xxxi., Book 1, of Montaigne, « That we ought to set about soberly in judging of Divine ordinances.”] (Erased.)

St. Paul in the island of Malta. (Erased.)

On the Pope and the Church

Translated by George Pearce, 1849

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EDITORIAL NOTICES.



THE LATTER AND most finished portion of this section, the greater part of which, however, has not been before published, appeared first in Bossut's edition, under the title, "Comparison of the Ancient Christians with those of the present day."

This piece is not found in the autograph MS. or the copy, but it is in the three following MSS.: namely, "Suppl. Franç." No. 176. This is a very indifferent copy, without any title. At the close, is the following note:—" To this piece may be given some such title as this, — What are the causes of the indifference and deficient instruction of Christians in the present day?" This note leads to the belief that this fragment is one of the two minor compositions, which the Abbé Perier communicated, in 1711, to the Benedictine Dom Touttée, and at the foot of which the latter had "placed nearly the same tide." Second, The little MS. in 8vo. with this title:—" Reflections on the manner in which admission was formerly obtained into the church; and how those so admitted conducted themselves: how they are admitted, and what their conduct in the present day." This copy is also incorrect, and several paragraphs are transposed. Third, The first MS. Collection of P. Guerrier, bearing the inscription, "Another writing of M. Pascal."

It is the text of this last that we have adopted, as the most correct of all; attaching to it the title which it bears in the small 8vo. MS. To conclude, however, the composition is not preserved in a perfect state in any of the MSS. There are several breaks, (lacunes,) all traces of which Bossut has removed; but which we have thought it right to indicate, in conformity with M. Guerrier's copy, wherein, with his usual accuracy, the marks are preserved by points.

(French Editor.)

* * * *

A very few portions of the remarks in this section have, as far as I have been able to discover, found their way into former collections of Pascal's writings, and the whole will be found well to deserve attention. It would not be suitable to the uncontroversial character of this work, to draw elaborate inferences from this series of reflections, adverse to Pascal's adherence to the Romanist system of faith. But it must occur to every reader, that upon many of its distinctive articles, his opinions were, at least, in a transition-state; and, in regard to some even, gradually approximating to an enlightened view of the fallibility of merely human systems, and a tempered right of private judgment.

His ardent concern for the interests of true religion, irrespective of its subordinate modifications, is also conspicuous in every part of these pleasing meditations. And it is equally clear, that, had he been able to foresee the controversies which have lately agitated the Church, even in Protestant communions, his voice would have been raised in favour of the great essentials of religion, as outweighing all external observances, however important in themselves; and even its most essential and divinely instituted rites would have been regarded by him as inefficacious, if not followed by a true conversion of the heart to God, and an implicit reception of the terms upon which alone man's eternal welfare can be secured.

These sections will nearly close the present volume, and form a not unsuitable introduction to the one to follow; in which will be furnished the "Thoughts upon the Christian Religion," together with other papers of a theological character. In these writings will be seen, more clearly, perhaps, than heretofore, what was the faith into which this great man is charged, by the philosophy of a modern school, with taking refuge from the disquietudes of a universal scepticism; how large were its views, how deep its foundation, and how catholic its aims. They will exhibit him, wasting under disease, but exulting in the prospect of an everlasting exemption from infirmity and sorrow; and, while the shadowy objects of earth

were losing their importance in his view, absorbed and filled with the realities of eternity. They will show him, after exploring all human philosophy, finding truth alone in the pages of a Divine inspiration; and the acknowledged leader of his day in learning and science — experiencing his highest joy in devoting all the efforts of his great capacity to the spiritual improvement of his fellow-men.

(Translator.)

ON THE POPE AND THE CHURCH.

I. Church. Pope.



UNITY, MULTITUDE. CONSIDERING the Church in its unity, the Pope, for the time being, is head over all; and as it were, everything. Considering it in multitude, the Pope is but a part.

+ The Fathers have considered it sometimes in the one light, sometimes in the other.

+ thus they have spoken variously of the Pope.

+ St. Cyprian: “Sacerdos Dei.”

+ But in maintaining one of these two truths, they have not excluded the other.

Multitude, when not reduced to unity, becomes confusion; unity, which depends not upon multitude, is tyranny, + Nowhere scarcely, but in France, is it allowed to say the council is superior to the Pope.

II. We are not to judge of the Papal office by a few expressions of the Fathers, (as the Greeks stated in a council — an important rule!) but by the uniform tenor of the church, and the Fathers, and by the canons.

— The Pope is the head. Who else is there that is known of all? Who also is acknowledged by all? Insinuating himself through the whole body, holding the master-key, which commands everything.

+ How easily might all this degenerate into tyranny! Therefore Jesus Christ has left this precept:—” Vos autem non sic.”

— + Unity and multitude: “Duo aut très in Unum.” It is an error, to exclude either of the two, like the Papists, who exclude the multitude; or the Huguenots, who exclude unity.

III. + The Pope dislikes and fears the learned, [“Les savants the copies have here “les souverains,” in contradiction to the MS.] who are not attached to the See by vows.

IV. + Kings can dispose of their sovereignties; but Popes cannot dispose of theirs.

V. We desiderate certainty. We like that the Pope should be infallible in the faith, and that learned doctors [The allusion is quietly ironical, to the learned doctors of probability.] should be the like in morals; and then we are secure.

VI. God does not work miracles in the ordinary course of things in his church. It would be remarkable if infallibility were to be found in one individual; but that it should be found in a multitude seems so natural, that the intervention of Divinity is concealed in nature, as in all his other works.

VII. + In the Bull, “ Cum ex apostolatus officio” by Paul IV., published in 1558: —

+ “We order and command, that every one of those who have wandered, or fallen into heresy or schism, of whatsoever condition, lay, ecclesiastical, bishops, archbishops, patriarchs, primates, cardinals, counts, marquises, dukes, kings and emperors; besides the sentences and penalties subjoined, be absolutely deprived, wholly, and entirely, of their orders, sees, benefices, offices, kingdoms, empires; and incapable of enjoying them again for evermore.

+ “We further abandon such persons to the secular authorities for punishment; and we grant no other mercy to those who in sincere penitence would retract their errors, except that, by the benignity and clemency of the Holy See, they may, if thought deserving, be permitted to be shut Up in a monastery, there to do perpetual penance on bread and water; but ever to remain deprived of all dignity, order, prelature, county, duchy, kingdom. And all who shall conceal and defend them shall be adjudged excommunicated, and infamous; deprived of all royalties, states, goods and possessions, which shall be the right and property of all who shall first get possession of them.” municatos zelo catholicae matrix ardentes aliquem eorum trucidasse contigerit.”

(In the margin of the preceding passage are the following notes: —)

+ After having thoroughly tormented you, they will send you home again. (Erased.)

— + It is as poor a consolation as that of the abuse of appeals — for it is a great instrument of abuse; besides that most of them will not have means to defray a journey from the farthest parts of Périgord or Anjou, to plead before the Parliament at Paris, and will always have to encounter arrests of judgment, which will be procured against their appeals. (Erased.)

— + For, although they may not obtain their object, the very endeavour is an indication of their power, which is so great as to induce them to make demands so unjust, that it is evident to all that they cannot be conceded. (Erased.)

— + This only serves more plainly to discover their objects, and the necessity of not permitting the registration of the Bull, which they are aiming to make the foundation of this novel institution. (Erased.)

+ This is not a simple Bull, but a foundation. (Erased.)

— + On leaving the court. (Erased.) [It is evident, although it seems to have escaped the acuteness of the French Editor, that all these passages following the bull,'—" Cum ear," &c., have reference to the 20th Provincial Letter, on the contemplated French Inquisition; which, though supposed to be principally written by Nicole, is proved by these memoranda, (as has been elsewhere stated,) to have been published with the sanction and assistance of Pascal: for some of the expressions in these rough notes are, verbatim, to be found in that paper. See Preface to Provincial Letters. (Transl.)]

— + 121. The Pope forbids the King to give his children in marriage without his permission. 1294.

— ... 124. 1302.

VIII. + If the ancient church was in error, she has fallen. Although she exists at the present day, she is not the same, for she possesses the advantage of the traditions derived from antiquity; and thus, this submission and conformity to the ancient church regulates and corrects everything. But the ancient church did not

contemplate the nature and constitution of that which was to come, in the way in which we contemplate the past.

IX. + The church has invented in vain the terms, anathema, heresy, &c. They are made to serve against her.

X. The way in which the church has been maintained is, by holding truth to be not subject to question; or, if questioned, then there was the Pope, — otherwise there was the church.

XI. + The church has always been assailed by opposing errors; but, probably, never so much so as now. Yet if she now suffers more from the multiplicity of errors, she derives from them this advantage, — that they destroy each other.

— + She complains of both; but much more of Calvinists, on account of their schismatical tendencies.

— + It is certain that many on the opposing sides are deceived; they must be disabused.

— + Faith admits many truths seemingly contradictory:—" Time to laugh, to weep," &c. "Respondere ne respondeat" &c.

— + The origin of this is the union of two natures in Christ — + And so of the two worlds. The creation of a new heaven and a new earth; new life new death; everything duplicated; and yet the same names remaining.

— + And, finally, the two natures (deux hommes) in the righteous; for they are the two worlds, and members and types of Jesus Christ. And analogous to this are all the terms employed; — such as justified sinners, living death, dying life, elect sinner, &c.

XII. — There is then a great number of truths, both in faith and morals, which seem antagonistic, and yet harmonize in admirable order.

— The source of all heresies is the exclusion of some one of these truths; and the source of all the cavils brought against us by heretics, is their ignorance of some one of these truths.

— And it usually happens that, being unable to perceive the relation of two opposing truths, and believing that the admission of the one involves the

exclusion of the other, they adhere to the one and renounce the other; and fancy that we do the contrary. Now this exclusion is the source of their heresy, and the ignorance we have shown them to labour under, the ground of their cavils.

+ 1st Example. Christ is God and man. The Arians, unable to combine these things, which they hold to be incompatible, say, he is man: therein they are orthodox. But they deny him to be God: herein they are heretical. They pretend that we deny his humanity: therein they show their ignorance.

+ 2d Example. Respecting the Sacrament: —

We believe that the substance of the bread being changed, and being consubstantially in that of the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, it is really present in it. This is one truth. Another is, that this sacrament is also one of the types of the cross and the glory, and a commemoration of both. This is the Catholic faith, which comprehends the two truths seemingly opposed to each other.

The modern heretics, not understanding that this sacrament contains both the presence of Christ and its type, and that it is both a sacrifice and a commemoration of a sacrifice, believe that the one of these truths cannot be admitted without necessarily excluding the other.

They make their stand upon this one point, — that this sacrament is figurative; and therein they are not heretical. They think we exclude this truth; and thence it is that they bring so many objections to the passages in the Fathers which affirm it. Lastly, they deny the presence; and in that are heretics.

+ 3d Example. Indulgences. [Unfortunately this topic is not followed out. Pascal's illustration of such a subject would hare been an intellectual curiosity, and probably fenced round with much of that reservation which his high moral standard, and enlightened and scriptural views, would have dictated: yet what would he have made of it? And who ever exposed more unsparingly, in his other writings, the abuses to which the practice gives rise? (Transl.)]

— Therefore it is that the shortest way to prevent heresies is to instruct men in every kind of truth; and the surest way to refute them, is to declare it as universally.

+ For what say the heretics?

— + To ascertain whether an opinion be from one of the Fathers.....

+ The error they all fall into, is the more dangerous, from each pursuing one truth: their fruit is not in adopting falsehood, but in not embracing the countervailing truth.

XIII. There is a pleasure in being in a vessel tossed by storms, if we can be satisfied that we shall not perish. The persecutions which agitate the church are of this nature.

XIV. The history of the church might more properly be called the history of the truth.

XV. Priests of all sorts of people, as under Jeroboam.

+ It is shocking to be told, as in the present day, — the discipline of the church is so good, that it would be criminal to propose changes. Formerly it was infallibly good, and yet we find that it admitted of changes; and now, being what it is, we are not to desire any change!

+ It has been allowed to degenerate from the practice which then prevailed, of appointing to the priesthood with so much circumspection, that instances of unworthiness were most rare; and we are not now to be allowed to mourn the laxity by which so many that are unworthy of the office are appointed!

XVI. + God has not permitted absolution to be given without the intervention of the church; as it is she who resents the offence, so should she have part in the pardon. The Divine will has associated her in this prerogative, as sovereigns do their parliaments; but if the church absolve or bind without God, it is no longer the act of the church. So it is with the parliament; although the king may have pardoned a criminal, the act must be regularly enrolled; but if the parliament enrol such act without the king, or refuse to enrol on the order of the king, it is no longer done by the royal parliament, but by an illegal assembly.

XVII. + It is not the absolution alone which remits sin in the sacrament of penance; but penitence, which is not valid if it does not avail itself of the sacrament.

+ So it is not the mere nuptial benediction which serves to obviate sin in bringing a progeny into the world; but a desire to bring up our children for God, which can only be sincere in the marriage state.

XVIII. + The church teaches, and God gives his inspiration; — both, with infallibility. The office of the church is only to prepare for pardon or condemnation. What she does suffices for condemnation, not for inspiration ("suffit pour condamner, non pour inspirer").

XIX. + On confessions and absolutions without signs of sorrow: —

God alone sees the heart of man; the church can judge only of his external conduct. God pardons as soon as he discerns penitence in the heart; the church when she sees it in the life. God can make a church so pure within, that it may confound, by its internal and spiritual sanctity, the internal impiety of proud sages and pharisees; and the church can produce a body of men, whose external conduct may be so pure, as to confound the morality of the heathen. If, among them, there be hypocrites, but so disguised that the church cannot detect the imposture, she endures them; for although they cannot deceive God, they may escape the eye of man. Thus she suffers no dishonour from a conduct on the part of her members which bears the appearance of sanctity.

But you desire that the church should judge, neither of the interior, because that belongs only to God, — nor of the exterior, because God has to do only with the interior; and thus, taking from him all concernment with man, you leave in the church the most abandoned persons; and such as the Jewish synagogues and the ancient sects would have abhorred as impious, and chased from their societies as unworthy! [The MS. has only these words:— "but you desire that the church"... the rest of the page is torn off. The remainder of the passage, as given above, is found in the copy.]

+ Thus, if it be true, on the one hand, that some lax professors, and some currupt casuists, not members of the hierarchy, have wallowed in defilement; it is not to be denied, that the true pastors of the church, and the authorized

depositaries of divine truth, have unflinchingly defended her against all the efforts of those who have conspired for her overthrow.

+ Therefore the faithful have no pretence to follow the laxities propounded to them so profanely, on the part of these casuists, instead of the pure doctrine presented by the paternal solicitudes of their own pastors. And the impious and heretical have no ground for adducing these abuses, as showing a defect in the care of God over his own church; for the church, being properly contained in the hierarchy, so far from concluding, from the existing state of things, that she is abandoned to abuses, never was it more apparent than at this time, that God is defending her from corruption.

+ For, if it have happened that certain of those who, by an extraordinary call, have professed to forsake the world, and to assume a religious profession, in order to live by stricter rules than the generality of Christians, — if any of these have fallen into enormities which excite the horror of the pious, and have become, among ourselves, what the false prophets were to the Jews; — this is an individual and personal calamity, which must indeed be deplored, but which justifies no conclusions against the care of God for his church. All these things are clearly predicted, and it has ever been announced that such trials would arise on the part of men of this description; and persons well instructed see in them marks of God's providential government, rather than of his forgetfulness of the church.

+ You show yourselves ignorant of the prophecies, if you know not that all this must come to pass: — princes, prophets, popes, and even priests. And yet the church abides. It is by God's grace that we are not of the number. Woe to such priests! Yet let us hope, that the mercy of our God will still preserve us from their guilt.

1 St. Peter, ch ii. False prophets in times past, types of those to come.

XXI. What impairs our powers of comparing the past transactions of the church with what we see around us is, that we are accustomed to regard St. Athanasius, St. Theresa, and others, as persons crowned with glory,... and like a species of divinities. Now that time has cleared up many things, this also is made

plain to us. At the period of his persecutions this great saint was simply a man called Athanasius, and St. Theresa a maiden. “ Elias was a man of like passions with ourselves,” says St. Peter, in order to disabuse the Christians of that false idea which led them to reject the example of the saints, as disproportioned to our attainments. “ Ah, those were saints,” we cry; “they were not persons like ourselves!”

+ But what really occurred at that time? St. Athanasius was a man named Athanasius, accused of various crimes, condemned by such and such councils, for such and such offences. All the bishops concurred, and finally the Pope. What was said of those who resisted? That they disturbed the public peace, were guilty of schism, &c.

+ There were then four sorts of characters: there was zeal without knowledge; knowledge without zeal; neither knowledge nor zeal; both zeal and knowledge. The three first condemn him; the last acquit him, — are excommunicated from the church, — and yet were the saviours of the church from whose bosom they were banished!

— + Zeal, illumination.

REFLECTIONS ON THE MANNER IN WHICH CONVERTS WERE FORMERLY RECEIVED INTO THE CHURCH

HOW THEY THEN CONDUCTED THEMSELVES; HOW THEY ENTER, AND CONDUCT THEMSELVES IN IT AT THE PRESENT TIME.

[MS. Coll, of P. Guerrier, p. 227.]

In the early ages, Christians were thoroughly instructed in all things necessary for salvation; whereas we, at present, witness such gross ignorance, as to cause deep affliction to all who feel regard and affection for the church.

Admission was then obtained into the church only after severe efforts and long-continued desires; now, men find an entrance without trouble, care, or labour.

Converts were then not received without very strict examination. Now, they are received even before they are in a state to be examined.

They were then not admitted, until they had abjured their former mode of life; and had renounced the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Now, they enter without being in a condition of mind to do any of these things.

Lastly, it was in those times necessary to forsake the world, in order to be received into the church; at the present day, on the other hand, the church is entered simultaneously with the world. It was seen, by the former procedure, how essentially different were the world and the church.

They were then regarded as opposed to each other, as irreconcilable enemies; the one of which was the object of exterminable persecution from the other; and the weaker of the two, to appearance, destined one day to triumph over the stronger. Thus, the one of these opposing parties was always quitted, on going over to the other; the principles of the one were abandoned, on embracing the principles of the other; men divested themselves of the views of the one, when they took up the views of the other: in short, they forsook, they renounced, they

abjured the world, in which they had had their first birth, in order to devote themselves entirely to the church, in which they obtained a second birth. In this way was realized the solemn difference between the world and the church; whereas, at the present day, people find themselves, at the same time, in both the one and the other: the same moment that sees our birth in the world, is that of our second birth in the church; and thus, when reason supervenes, she discovers no distinction between these opposing spheres. She receives her growth in both at once. We partake of the sacraments, and we enjoy, at the same time, the pleasures of the world; and thus, while formerly an immeasurable distinction was preserved between the one and the other, now they are blended, confounded, — and all distinction is lost.

Thence it was that, in former times, none were found among the ranks of Christianity, but those who were well instructed in its truths; now, the ignorance that prevails is frightful. Thence it was, that those regenerated by baptism, and who had forsaken the vicious practices of the world for the devoutness of the church, so rarely relapsed from the church to the world; now, on the other hand, nothing is more common than to see the vices of the world cherished in the very heart of Christians.

The holiness of the church is utterly sullied by the debasements of the wicked: and her own children, born and nourished from their infancy in her bosom, are those who lay bare her inmost recesses — the celebration of her most august mysteries — to the invasion of her deadly enemies, worldliness of spirit, ambition, revenge, impurity, concupiscence: while the love borne by the church to her children compels her to admit, without resistance, these her most cruel persecutors.

But it is not the church to which we ought to impute the evils which have ensued upon this abandonment of so salutary a discipline: she has never changed in spirit, although she may have changed in conduct. Considering that the postponement of baptism left large numbers of children under the curse of Adam, she was desirous of delivering them from the danger of perdition to which they

were exposed, by hastening her succour; and now, that tender Parent sees, with deep concern, that the means by which she sought the salvation of the children, has occasioned the ruin of the adults.

Her real intention is, that those whom she withdraws, at so tender an age, from the contamination of the world, should embrace sentiments wholly opposed to those of the world. She anticipates the development of reason, in order to prevent the vices which a corrupted reason brings with it; and, before their minds ripen into activity, she would fill them with her influences, — that they may remain in ignorance of the world, remote from her vices, and even unconscious of their existence. This is evident from the ceremonies in use in baptism: for the sacrament is only administered to children, on a declaration, by the mouth of their sponsors, that they desire admission into the church, — that they are believers, — that they renounce the world and the devil. And, as the church desires that they should retain these dispositions to the end of their existence, she expressly commands the inviolable observance of them; and directs their sponsors, as an indispensable condition, to instruct the children in these holy things. For she desires not that those whom she has nursed in her bosom should, in these days, be less instructed and less zealous, than the adults who were of old admitted to her communion; she would not allow of lower attainments in those she has herself nourished, than in those whom she had thus received...

[A break here occurs in the MS]

Yet is all this perverted from the intentions of the church; and we feel oppressed in the contemplation of our degeneracy. We seem, as it were, to value no longer this great benefit, because we did not ourselves desiderate it, because we did not personally solicit it, because we cannot even recall the fact of its reception...[A break here occurs in the MS]...

But as it is evident that the church does not require a lower degree of zeal in those whom she has brought up and domesticated in the faith, than in such as are seeking admission into it, these latter ought to keep their eye upon the example of the catechumens, and mark their ardour, their devotion, their dread of the world,

and magnanimous renouncement of its delights; and, if they are not deemed worthy of baptism without such dispositions, surely those who cannot discover such in themselves...[Break in MS.]

..They ought then to submit to receive the instructions, which would have been given them had they been now first entering into communion with the church; they must further practise habitual penitence, and feel less aversion to austerity and mortification; they must cease to delight in the poisoned charms of sin... [Break in MS.]

To dispose them to receive due instruction, they ought to be made to understand the difference of the customs observed by the church in successive periods..... [Break in MS.] that, in the early days of the church, the catechumens (that is, those who aspired to baptism) were examined previous to the rite; and were not admitted without receiving full instructions in the mysteries of religion; without evincing sincere penitence for sin; without acquiring a large acquaintance with the greatness and excellence of the profession of faith and doctrine into which they sought an entrance; without showing sensible marks of a true conversion of heart, and an earnest desire of participation in the rite. These things being palpable to the whole church, the sacrament was conferred upon them, as an act of incorporation and admission to membership in the church; but, in these times, baptism being administered (for important reasons) to infants before the development of reason, it too often happens that, through the negligence of parents, youth are suffered to grow up to maturity without any sufficient knowledge of the great truths of religion.

When instruction was a pre-requisite for baptism, all were instructed; but now that baptism precedes instruction, the requisite teaching is left to the will of the individual, and is thence neglected and almost abandoned.

The real cause of this is, that baptism is believed to be indispensable, but not instruction. Therefore, when instruction preceded the rite, the necessity of the one involved a necessary recourse to the other; but now, as baptism precedes

instruction, as a Christian may be made without knowledge, so it is supposed that he may remain a Christian without instruction...

..

And while the early Christians evinced the deepest gratitude to the church, for a benefit conferred by her only after prolonged solicitation; an equal insensibility is now shown for the like benefit which is conferred before the candidate is even capable, in his own person, of applying for the rite. And if the church resented so strongly the instances, though rare, of falling away among the former, how much must she hold in abhorrence the declensions and perpetual relapses of the latter, — whose obligations are the deeper, inasmuch as they have been so much earlier, and by a freer grace, delivered from the ruin in which they were involved by the condition of their natural birth! She cannot see without dismay her choicest benefits thus abused, and all her labours for the salvation of her children made the almost certain instrument of their destruction; for she has not...[Bossut thus finishes the paragraph:—" for she has not changed in spirit, although her customs have changed]

(Note of P. Guerrier.) "I have transcribed this short essay from two copies, scarcely legible, and almost decayed by the effect of time."

Conversation on Religion



Translated by George Pearce, 1849

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.



I HAVE THOUGHT it better to bring this paper at present before the reader, although it was intended, as before stated, to reserve it for a subsequent volume. It is extracted from the Introduction prefixed by Pascal's literary friends to their first publication of his Works, and is probably the composition of Nicole, or De Saci. For a more particular description of the circumstances under which this conversation took place, the reader is referred to the "Memoir," in a former volume. It occurred when Pascal was in about his thirtieth year; and, consequently, rather less than ten years before his death.

"This is the short abstract which has been handed down of the Plan of Pascal's work; and, short as it is, it gives us some faint view of the comprehensiveness of his genius, — of the grasp that he had of his subject, — and of the irresistible mass of evidence in existence for the support of the Christian religion, if it could be thus brought to bear upon the question by the energies of one great mind, adapted for the purpose." — Craig's Mem of Pascal. (Transl.)

NARRATIVE OF A CONVERSATION IN WHICH PASCAL RELATED THE PLAN AND SUBSTANCE OF HIS CONTEMPLATED WORK ON RELIGION.



IT HAPPENED ON a certain occasion, about ten or twelve years since, that M. Pascal was induced to deliver what he had revolved in his mind upon the subject above referred to, in the way of verbal relation. It was done in the presence, and at the request of, several of his friends; and, among them, some of considerable distinction. He unfolded to them on this occasion, in a few words, the plan of his entire work; he described the subject, and the proposed matter; briefly recapitulated the reasons which had induced the undertaking, and the principles upon which it was to be founded; and explained the order and connexion he intended to pursue. And those persons, than whom none were more competent to judge of these things, reported that they never heard a more beautiful address, or one more powerful, affecting, and convincing. They were delighted with what they heard; and from the specimen thus afforded, in a discourse carried on for a period of between two and three hours, delivered on the spur of the moment, and without effort or premeditation, they drew the most exalted conclusions of the projected work, if it should ever be carried into full execution by one with whose powers they were so well acquainted, one so matured in literary composition, and one, especially, whose fastidiousness of taste in his writings was so great. He was, indeed, rarely satisfied with his first conceptions, however good they might appear to others; and was accustomed to transcribe as frequently as six or eight times, compositions which ordinary readers deemed as perfect as they could be from their very first transmission to paper.

After having explained to his hearers what kind of demonstrations were wont the most to impress, and produce conviction in the minds of men, he proceeded to

show that the Christian religion bore marks of authority and certainty as great as any of those things which are received by mankind as most indubitable and established.

He opened his scheme by drawing a portraiture of man; in which he omitted nothing that could contribute, externally or internally, to a faithful resemblance, even to the most secret recesses and movements of the heart. He then supposed the case of a man, who, having passed his life in ignorance of and indifference to everything, and especially himself, is brought, at length, to contemplate himself by this portraiture, and to consider what he really is. In this review, he discovers with surprise a multitude of things upon which he had never before reflected, A vivid representation, and one that excited the astonishment and admiration of all, was made by the speaker, of both the grandeur and the baseness of man; of his capabilities and his feebleness; the uncertainties and obscurity which surround him on all sides; and the endless contradictions which cross and mingle in his nature. The least enlightened could not, after such a revelation, relapse into indifference; and however insensible they might heretofore have been, they could not but desire, after being thus shown their present state, to know more of the original purposes of their creation, and their future destiny.

M. Pascal having succeeded in exciting a desire to seek the solution of these momentous uncertainties, addressed himself first to those of philosophical minds: and, after unfolding to them all that the most eminent teachers of every sect had inculcated upon the subject of man, he showed such defects, such inconclusiveness, so many contradictions, and so much falsehood, in all their theories, as to make it evident to persons of that description, that it was not in such instructors that any confidence was to be placed.

He then made them accompany him in a survey of all the countries of the world, and all periods of time, and observe the infinitude of religious systems that had prevailed: but he led them to see at the same time, that all these systems so abound with vanity, folly, errors, sophistry, and extravagance, that there is nothing in them really satisfying to the soul.

He then called their attention to the Jewish nation, and fixed their view on the extraordinary circumstances of their history. After describing all the singularities of this people, he paused to remark particularly the influence exercised over them by the means of a single Book, comprehending alike their history, their law, and their religion. He no sooner (said he) opens this book, than he learns that this world is the creation of one God; and that the same God has created man in his own image, and endowed him with all those qualities of body and mind that befitted such an origin. If there were no corroboration of this truth from other sources, reason alone would suffice to show, that there is more probability in this supposition, — that one great Being, a God, is the author of man, and of all things in the entire universe, — than in the various fancies which these same men have devised by their unaided reason. He is, however, arrested at this point by perceiving, in the delineation he has given of man, that he is now very far from possessing all those advantages which he enjoyed when he passed out of the hands of his Maker. But he does not remain long under this difficulty; for, as he pursues his study of the same book, he finds that, &fter man had been created by God in a state of innocence, and in the possession of every perfection, his first act was to rebel against his Creator, and employ the high qualifications he had received at his hand, as instruments of offence against him.

M. Pascal then went on to show that this crime, being in all its circumstances the most heinous that could have been committed, had been punished, not only in the person of this first man, but in his descendants also; to whom this first transgressor communicated his own misery, weakness, and corruption, and will continue so to communicate it, as long as time shall last.

He now pointed out various passages in the book, in which this truth is revealed. He called attention to the fact that, in it, man is never spoken of but with reference to this state of impotence and disorder; that in various parts it is stated, that all flesh is corrupt, that men have given themselves up to evil inclinations, and are prone to sin from their birth. He made his hearers remark, that this first fall is the source, not only of whatever is most inexplicable in man’s nature, but

also of a multitude of circumstances, external to him, and of which he knows not the causes. Finally, he showed that human nature is faithfully depicted throughout the book, and is in every respect conformable to the representation made by himself at the outset.

The speaker next proceeded to open the sources of consolation which the book contained. He pointed out the statements therein made, that the remedy for these evils must proceed from the hand of God; that he is willing to be entreated of by us for assistance; and engages even to provide a Deliverer for man, — one who shall make satisfaction in his stead, and supply his own deficiencies and impotence.

After making a number of forcible remarks upon this remarkable book, he desired them to notice, that it is the only one which has ever spoken in a becoming manner of the Supreme Being, and furnished any just idea of a religion entitled to credibility. He laid down for consideration the most obvious marks of such a system; applying them to that which the book in question inculcates; and he drew the especial attention of his auditors to a feature which he deemed the essence of true religion, — the love of the God which is professed to be adored; — a character, altogether peculiar to this one religious system, and which visibly distinguishes it from every other; whose falsehood is, in fact, apparent from the want of this essential feature.

Hitherto, M. Pascal, while preparing his hearer's minds, and insensibly leading them to his conclusions, had laid down no positive proofs of the truths he wished to establish; he, however, had brought them into a disposition to receive them with readiness, and even heartily to desire that those proofs might be found solid and well founded, inasmuch as they were so obviously conducive to the tranquillity of the spirit, and the clearing up of its uncertainties. They were in that state of mind, which would be natural to all reasonable persons following out such a train of reasoning as had been thus furnished; and it could be little doubted, that, after such a preparation, they would easily yield conviction to the arguments

which their instructor next brought forward, to confirm and establish those important verities which form the foundation of the Christian religion.

Proceeding, then, to furnish a brief view of those proofs, after showing, generally, that the truths under discussion were really contained in this book, the authenticity of which no person of competent understanding could doubt, he paused principally upon the writings of Moses, in which these revelations are chiefly comprised; and he made it apparent, by a large number of indubitable coincidences, that it was equally impossible that Moses should have left on record a mere collection of falsehoods, and that the people to whom they were delivered, would have allowed themselves to be so imposed upon.

He then went over the principal Miracles recorded in the work; and as they are most important supports of the religious system taught therein, he proved it to be impossible that they should not be true; not only on the authority of the writings in which they are recorded, but from all the accompanying circumstances from which they derive corroboration.

He next explained the figurative character of the entire law of Moses; showed how all that had befallen the Jewish nation was only a type of those truths which were accomplished at the coming of the Messiah; and that the veil which concealed these figures having been raised, it was easy to trace the accomplishment and perfect consummation of them, in favour of those who have received Jesus Christ.

M. Pascal next proceeded to prove the truth of religion from Prophecy; and on this head he enlarged more than on the preceding. Having made these questions the subject of deep study, and entertaining upon them certain views of a nature wholly original, he explained them with great clearness; he unfolded their meaning and fulfilment, with surprising exactitude, and brought them before his hearers in all their lucidness and force.

Lastly, after going through the Books of the Old Testament, and making various striking observations upon their contents, in reference to the fundamental

evidences of revelation, he proceeded to those of the New Testament, and deduced from them also his crowning proofs of the truth of the Gospel.

He began with Christ; and although he had incontrovertibly established his divine mission out of the prophecies, and the symbols of the law, whose entire accomplishment centred in him, he adduced various evidences to the same effect, from his personal qualifications, his miracles, his doctrines, and all the circumstances of his life, and tenor of his actions.

He then descanted upon the character of the chosen Apostles; and, in order to establish the truth of the faith which they were commissioned universally to publish, after showing that they could only be charged with falsehood on one of two suppositions, — that they were deceivers themselves, or had in their turn been made dupes; he made it apparent that both these suppositions were equally impossible.

Finally, omitting nothing that could confirm the veracity of the Gospel history, he concluded with a variety of beautiful and impressive remarks upon the New Testament books themselves; — upon the style of the Evangelists, and their personal history; upon the Apostles, and their several writings; the multitude of Miracles, the Martyrs, and the Saints: in a word, on the various and copious evidences by which the Christian religion is so triumphantly established. And, although the limited nature of his discourse did not allow him to treat these various topics with all that Copiousness which his projected work contemplated; what he brought forward was abundantly sufficient to prove, that all these things were no work of man; and that it was an Infinite Mind alone which could have devised the concurrence of so vast a multitude of events, for proving, in the most incontestable manner, the truth of that religion, which God himself came down from heaven to establish among men.

* * * *

The above is the substance of the discourse on this occasion, which was delivered to the assembled audience, only as an epitome of the great work which the speaker was contemplating; and it is from the reports of some persons present, that the small portion here furnished has been collected.

CONCLUSION.



IN BRINGING THE present volume to a close, it may be not uninteresting to take a brief retrospect of the diversified subjects it has presented to the reader; and hastily to retrace a road, which I venture to believe has been traversed not wholly without satisfaction or advantage.

The series opened with the slender remains of Pascal's Correspondence, which have escaped the vicissitudes of centuries, and have, for the most part, been only recently brought to light. These Letters admit us, after a lapse of time which enhances their interest, to many of the secrets of his own bosom, and to some pleasing scenes of his domestic circle. We find in them the records of sore disquietudes; and painfully trace the pressure of physical infirmity and a wounded spirit; yet all sustained with the meekness and patience which were his habitual characteristics. In the solemn reflections to which the bereavement of a revered parent gave rise, conveyed in language of almost unequalled eloquence, we learn the sources from which his own supports in sorrow were derived, and the solid grounds of scriptural doctrine and Christian hope, on which were placed the consolations he tenderly administered to the beloved relatives who shared his affliction. The chastened communications with his young and too attractive pupil, — that romantic episode, which at once gilds and saddens the records of his early years, — furnish us with touching glimpses of the blight of youthful hope and ambition which he then sustained; while we see, with admiration, the fond anticipations of earthly joy merged and swallowed up, in solicitude for the eternal interests of her, who had once been the object of his deep, but conquered attachment.

From the effusions of friendship and love, in epistolary confidence, we were brought to the more robust exercises of the philosopher and mathematician. It is

here that Pascal is found on his strongest ground. In the fine delineation of the " Geometrical Spirit," we meet with the soundest rules of rigid definition, and incontrovertible demonstration. We are led on, from the simplest of geometrical propositions, to the great principles upon which the whole visible creation, in all its magnitude and minuteness, has been suspended by its mighty Maker; and lose ourselves, at length, in admiring contemplation of the infinitudes of time, motion, and space!

In the next of these treatises, connected with the exact sciences, we find laid down, with admirable simplicity and force, the limits within which' a finite understanding should restrict its investigations. While the barriers which Revelation assigns to the knowledge and the capabilities of man are strictly imposed, the amplest field is laid open to his researches in human philosophy and science. It is shown, that the ages preceding our own have left this field unexhausted; and intelligence and curiosity are invited and encouraged to an unlimited progress.

But what is this that meets us next in our review? Have we here another Ovid, laying down, anew, rules for the gratification of animal desires? Is it a revived Catullus, or an anticipated Moore, pouring out amatory effusions, redolent with sensuality, and stimulating to voluptuousness? Nothing of all this is the portraiture here presented of the "Passion of Love." We may, it is true, have paused upon some of the positions which even a Pascal has maintained upon this hazardous subject; and those who know themselves the best, will feel that they need rather rules for the moderation of passion, than vivid pictures, however chaste in conception and true to nature, of their overpowering ascendancy and universal sway. Yet who ever before, painted love with an intelligence so bright, and a philosophy so lofty? And where, in the pages of romance, are furnished more touching pictures of its hopes and its fears, its elation and its despondencies? But could it indeed be otherwise; for the hand is a master's, and the portrait is himself!

The “most eloquent of men” next lays down the rules by which the thoughts of a superior intellect should be clothed, in language most adapted to captivate the auditor or the reader. They are the rules, in fact, by means of which he himself gained resistless entrance into the minds of men; and of their truth and value, the concurrent testimony of his contemporaries to all that lie uttered and wrote, and the approving verdict of posterity, furnish the best attestation.

We then come to the multitudinous fruits of learning, experience, and wisdom, which are laid up in one of the most copious collections of aphoristic writing that the literature of any language presents. We remember the comparatively brief term assigned to his earthly existence; and we are astonished at the mental power which had accumulated such rich and varied stores; and at that perfection of mental alchemy, by which the materials, thus collected, were elaborated into results so practical and so profound!

The youthful correspondent of learned sovereigns, laying at the feet of royally the proud but fragile produce of early genius, is now seen devoting his more matured powers to the instruction of rank and influence, in its high responsibilities. With a graceful bias in favour of aristocratical distinctions, with the polish of the courtier, heightened and dignified by Christian sentiment, he assigns the respective duties, both of the possessors of high rank, and of their inferiors in station, towards each other. From the one he exacts no austere renunciation of the innocent advantages which Providence has assigned to their position; from the other, no sordid homage unworthy of independent men to bestow. And, with beautiful discrimination, he indicates, what are those qualifications in the great which entitle to an external consideration, and what the richer endowments of intelligence and virtue, which command the secret tribute of the heart. These lessons of wisdom and refinement derive their crowning interest, from our knowledge of the tender friendship entertained by the instructor for the distinguished young person, who was the primary object of his precepts.

The dialogue next turns upon the philosophical systems of the ancient and the (then) modern schools. The stream of pleasant discourse flows on amidst the

tranquil shades of the Port Royal retreat; — those scenes sacred to learned repose, and pious meditation; which yet were, perhaps, sometimes sought by those, whom duty might have more beneficially left amongst the haunts of business, or in the discharge of social relations. In the graphic scene to which we are introduced, we might believe we were listening to the rich eloquence of Pascal, and the maturer wisdom of the venerable De Saci. We find set forth, the miserable rules of pride and self-dependence which were all that the heathen teacher could furnish, for the conduct of life, and the attainment of virtue; and are wholesomely instructed, by stern denunciations of those who, abusing the privileges of a purer theology, and a Divine revelation, have left men in the labyrinths of universal scepticism, and given them up to the resistless sway of their lusts and passions. In contrast with both, we have unfolded before us the Christian scheme, by which man's happiness and well-being in life, and hopes for eternity, are shown to be dependent upon his own improvement of those aids, which are offered to his acceptance by the hand of a just and beneficent Creator.

After this, we find ourselves admitted into another of those repositories, in which our author was accustomed to store the fruits of his meditations, and the materials from which he elaborated his richest compositions. We proceed yet further, and find ourselves in an armoury of thought, strewed with missiles, and hung round with weapons of assault, and defence. There it was, that the skilful controversialist polished and fastened the armour, by which he baffled the fiercest assaults of his opponents; and here were winged and barbed those shafts, alternately of irony and indignation, which carried terror and defeat into their infuriated ranks. And lastly, we penetrate, as it were, into the very inner chamber of his self-communings; and listen to breathings of the spirit, which were, perhaps, never designed to meet any eye but his own. We see in them stern and resentful glances cast at the tyranny of Papal Bulls, and the arrogance of hierarchical power. We find reproachful contrasts drawn between these corruptions of later days, and the simplicity of Apostolic rule. We have questions raised, but left undetermined, upon the extent to which infallibility should be

conceded to man. We listen to lamentations over the degeneracy of a church, which he yet could not renounce; and aspirations after a perfection, to which no human form of spiritual government is, probably, destined to attain. We contemplate, in short, a spirit ill at ease, restless and dissatisfied with all that the theology and the church around him presented; and ripe, perhaps, had longer life been given, to embrace a purer doctrine, and a more healthy discipline, — such as that which was fast spreading throughout neighbouring and more enlightened lands!

Yet all these topics, interesting and important as they were, were subordinated and eclipsed by that one great object to which the closing years of Pascal's life were devoted. To the noblest theme which could engage the thoughts or the pen of man, were now consecrated all his capacities, all his desires, — his toilsome days, and his watchful nights. To show the misery and hopelessness of man, without a voice and a guidance from heaven; to assert the authenticity and Divine authority of Scripture, in which that voice is heard; to silence, by the most copious evidences, internal and external, the cavils of atheism and infidelity against its revelations; to exhibit the necessities of man satisfied, and the types and prophecies which went before fulfilled, in the advent to our world, of a "God manifested in the flesh;" to show how our reconciliation with an offended Creator has been achieved by His sacrifice; and the gates of heaven and immortality opened to us by His resurrection: —

"To justify the ways of God to man;"

and to unfold the mighty scheme of the Eternal Mind in the creation of his moral universe; — these were the topics, enforced by eloquence, enriched by learning, elevated by philosophy, and carrying conviction to the heart, by a profound knowledge of man: this was the undertaking, in which all his

intellectual powers were absorbed, with a continually increasing intenseness, as the close of his earthly career drew near.

To the completion of this task, he, in his own calculations, devoted, when he had scarcely attained to manhood, a large proportion of that which, on ordinary estimates of life, might be the residue of his existence. But it seemed good to the Great Disposer of events to exhibit, in the partial disappointment of his hope, a signal instance of the instability of human designs, even the holiest and the best The great conception was matured; the outlines were fully drawn; the scenery began to live and glow; many portions were worked into finish and grace; the richer hues were about to be laid on, and the finer touches to be given; — when the hand of the artist was arrested, the pencil dropped; and the canvass remained, — incomplete, yet immortal!

* * * *

The copious materials thus collected, have been, as is well known, largely augmented by those recent discoveries of which an account has already been given. These compositions, restored to their original integrity, have been found susceptible of a highly lucid grouping and arrangement, conformable, as far as can be ascertained with the writer's scheme; a scheme which, in all its perspicuity and comprehensiveness, has been handed down to us (as has been seen in the paper immediately preceding the present) from his own lips, and in his own expressions; and the whole combined, accompanied with his original expositions, leave now little to desire, to aid our conceptions of the scope and spirit of this great work. It is this collection which will form the principal contents of a subsequent volume; and I venture to believe, that the reader who has given his attention to the foregoing pages, will be not unwilling to accompany me in those that are to follow.

THE TRANSLATOR.

Letters and Minor Works

Translated by Mary L. Booth and O. W. Wright, 1910

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A nineteenth century depiction of Pascal

Letters

From Pascal to His Sister Jacqueline



January 26, 1648.

MY DEAR SISTER,

WE have received your letters. I intended to reply to the first that you wrote me more than four months since, but my indisposition and some other things prevented me. Since then I have not been in a condition to write, either on account of my illness, for want of leisure, or for some other reason. I have few hours of leisure and health together; I shall however endeavor to finish this letter without forcing myself; I know not whether it will be long or short. My principal design is to make you understand the truth of the visit which you know of, in which I hoped to have wherewith to satisfy you and to reply to your last letters. I can commence with nothing else than the expression of the pleasure which they have given me; I have received satisfactions so sensible from them that I cannot tell them to you by word of mouth. I entreat you to believe that, though I may not have written to you, there has not been an hour in which you have not been present to me, in which I have not made wishes for the continuation of the great designs with which Heaven has inspired you. I have felt new transports of joy at all the letters which bore testimony of it, and I have been delighted to see the continuance of it without your receiving any news on our part. This has made me judge that there was a more than human support, since there was no need of human means to sustain it. I should be glad neverthe-less to contribute something to it; but I have none of the capacities necessary for that purpose. My weakness is so great that, if I should undertake it, I should do an act of temerity rather than of charity, and I should have a right to fear for us both the calamity that menaces the blind led by the blind. I have felt my incapacity incomparably more since the

visits which are in question; and far from having brought back enough of light for others, I have brought nothing but confusion and trouble for myself, which God alone can calm, and in which I shall work with care, but without impatience and disquietude, knowing well that both would remove me from it. I repeat that God alone can calm it, and that I shall work for this, since I find nothing but occasions for making it spring up and increase in those from whom I had expected its dissipation; so that, seeing myself reduced to myself alone, it remains to me only to pray to God that he may bless it with success. For this I shall have need of the aid of scholars and disinterested persons: the first will not afford it; I seek no longer but for the latter — and hence I desire infinitely to see you, for letters are long, inconvenient, and almost useless on such occasions. Nevertheless I will write you something of it.

The first time I saw M. Rebours, I made myself known to him and was received with as much civility as I could wish. This was due to my father, since I received it on his account. After the first compliments, I asked permission to see him again from time to time; he granted it to me: thus I was at liberty to see him, so that I do not account this first sight as a visit, since it was only the permission for such. I was there for some time, and among other conversation, I told him with my usual frankness and *naïveté,* that we had seen their books and those of their adversaries, which was sufficient to make him understand that we were of their sentiments. He expressed some pleasure at this. I then told him that I thought that many things could be demonstrated upon the mere principles of common-sense that their adversaries said were contrary to it, and that well-directed reasoning led to a belief in them, although it was necessary to believe in them without the aid of reasoning. These were my own words, in which I think there was not wherewith to wound the most severe modesty. But as you know that all actions may have two sources, and that such language might proceed from a principle of vanity and of confidence in reasoning, this suspicion, which was increased the knowledge that he had of my studies in geometry, sufficed to make

him find this language strange, and he expressed it to me by a repartee so full of humility and gentleness that it would doubtless have confounded the pride that he wished to refute. Still I endeavored to make him understand my motive; but my justification increased his suspicions and he took my excuses for obstinacy. I acknowledge that his discourse was so beautiful that if I had been in the state in which he believed me, he would have drawn me from it; but as I did not think myself in this disease; I opposed the remedy which he presented me; but he insisted on it the more, the more I seemed to evade it, because he took my refusal for obstinacy; and the more he strove to continue, the more my thanks testified to him that I did not consider it necessary; so that the whole of this interview passed in this equivocating and in an embarrassment which continued in all the rest, and which could not be unravelled. I shall not relate the others word for word, since it would not be necessary to my purpose, I shall only tell you in substance the purport af what was said on them, or rather, the principle of their restraint.

But I entreat you before all things to draw no conclusions from what I write, for things may escape me without sufficient precision; and this may cause some suspicion to spring up in you as disadvantageous as unjust. For indeed, after having reflected on it carefully, I find in it only an obscurity which it would be difficult and dangerous to decide, and for myself, I suspend my judgment entirely, as much from my weakness as from my want of knowledge.

Letter from Pascal and His Sister Jacqueline to their Sister, Madame Perier



APRIL 1, 1648.

WE do not know whether this letter will be interminable, like the rest, but we know that we would gladly write to you without end. We have here the letter of M. de Saint-Cyran, *de la Vocation,* lately published without approbation or privilege, which has shocked many. We are reading it; we will send it afterwards to you. We should be glad to know your opinion of it, and that of my father. It takes high ground.

We have several times begun to write to you, but I have been deterred from it by the example and the speeches, or, if you like, the rebuffs of which you know; but, since we have been enlightened upon the matter as much as possible, I believe that it is necessary to use some circumspection in it, and if there are occasions in which we ought not to speak of these things, we may now dispense with them; for we do not doubt each other, and as we are, as it were, mutually assured that we have, in all these discourses, nothing but the glory of God for our object, and scarcely any communication outside of ourselves, I do not see that we should have any scruple, so long as he shall give us these sentiments. If we add to these considerations that of the union which nature has made between us, and to this last that which grace has made, I think that, far from finding a prohibition, we shall find an obligation to it; for I find that our happiness has been so great in being united in the latter way that we ought to unite to acknowledge and to rejoice at it. For it must be confessed that it is properly since this time (which M. de Saint-Cyran wishes should be called the commencement of life), that we should consider ourselves as truly related, and that it has pleased God to join us in his new world by the spirit, as he had done in the terrestrial world by the flesh.

We beg you that there may not be a day in which you do not revolve this in memory, and often acknowledge the way which God has used in this conjunction, in which he has not only made us brothers of each other, but children of the same father; for you know that my father has foreseen us all, and, as it were, conceived us in this design. It is in this that we should marvel, that God has given us both the type and the reality of this union; for, as we have often said among ourselves, corporeal things are nothing but an image of spiritual, and God has represented invisible things in the visible. This thought is so general and so useful that we ought not to let much time pass without thinking of it with attention. We have discoursed particularly enough of the relation of these two sorts of things, for which reason we shall not speak of it here; for it is too long to write, and too beautiful not to have remained in your memory, and, what is more, is absolutely necessary according to my opinion. For, as our sins hold us wrapped in things corporeal and terrestrial, and as these are not only the penalty of our sins, but also the occasion of committing new ones, and the cause of the first, it is necessary that we should make use of the same position into which we have fallen to raise us from our overthrow. For this reason, we should use carefully the advantage which the goodness of God bestows upon us in having always before our eyes an image of the good that we have lost, and in surrounding us in the very captivity to which his justice has reduced us, with so many objects that serve to us as an ever-present lesson.

So that we should consider ourselves as criminals in a prison filled with images of their liberator, and instructions necessary to escape from their bondage; but it must be acknowledged that we cannot perceive these sacred characters without a supernatural light; for as all things speak of God to those who know him, and as they reveal him to all those who love him, these same things conceal him from all those who know him not. Thus it is seen, that in the darkness of the world men follow them in a brutal blindness, and cling to them, and make of them the final end of their desires, which they cannot do without sacrilege, for there is nothing but God that should be the final end, as he alone is the principle. For

whatever resemblance created nature may have to its Creator, and although the most trifling things, and the smallest and the vilest portion of the world represent at least by their unity the perfect unity that is found only in God, we cannot legitimately bear to them sovereign respect, since there is nothing so abominable in the eyes of God and man as idolatry, because it renders to the creature the honor that is due to none but the Creator. The Scripture is full of the vengeance that God executes on all those who have been guilty of it, and the first commandment of the Decalogue, which includes all the rest, prohibits above everything the adoration of his images. But as he is much more jealous of our affections than our respect, it is evident that there is no crime more injurious or more detestable to him than to bestow sovereign love upon created thins, although they represent him.

This is why those to whom God has made known these great truths ought to use these images to enjoy that which they represent, and not remain eternally in that carnal and Judaical blindness which causes the type to be taken for the reality, And those whom God, by regeneration, has drawn freely from sin (which is the veritable nothingness, since it is opposed to God, who is the veritable being) to give them a place in his Church, which is his real temple, after having drawn them freely from nothingness to the point of their creation, in order to give them a place in the universe, have a double obligation to honor him and serve him; since as created beings they should remain in the order of created beings, and not profane the place that they fill, and as Christians they should aspire without ceasing to render themselves worthy to form part of the body of Jesus Christ. But as whilst the created things that compose the world acquit themselves of their obligation by remaining within a limited perfection, because the perfection of the world is also limited, the children of God should set no bounds to their purity and their perfection, because they form part of a body wholly divine, and infinitely perfect; as it is evident that Jesus Christ does not limit the commandment of perfection, and that he proposes it to us as a model wherein it exists infinite when he says: “Be ye also perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect.” Thus it is a very

prejudicial and very common error among Christians, and even among those who make a profession of piety, to persuade themselves that there may be a degree of perfection in which they can be with assurance, and which it is not necessary to pass, since there is none at which it will not be wrong to stop, and from which we can only avoid falling by mounting still higher.

Letter from Pascal and His Sister Jacqueline to their Sister, Madame Perier



PARIS, NOVEMBER 5, afternoon, 1648.

MY DEAR SISTER,

Your letter has recalled to us a misunderstanding of which we had lost recollection, so absolutely had it passed from us. The somewhat too diffuse explanations that we have received have brought to light the general and former subject of our complaints, and the satisfaction that we have given has softened the harshness which my father had conceived for them. We said what you had already said, without knowing that you had said it, and then we excused verbally what you had afterwards excused in writing, without knowing that you had done so; and we knew not what you had done until after we had acted ourselves; for as we have hidden nothing from my father, he has revealed every thing, and thus cured all our suspicions. You know how much such troubles disturb the peace of the family both within and without, and what need we have in these junctures of the warnings which you have given us a little too late.

We have some to give you on the subject of your own. The first is in respect to what you say, that we have instructed you as to what you should write to us. 1^0. I do not remember to have spoken to you of it, so that this was a novelty to me; and, besides, even though this were true, I should fear that you had not retained this humanly, if you had not forgotten the person of whom you learned it to remember only God, who alone could have truly instructed you in it. If you remember it as a good thing, you cannot think to hold it from any other, since neither you nor the others can learn it except from God alone. For, although in

this kind of gratitude, we do not stop at the men whom we address as though they were the authors of the good that we receive through their means, this nevertheless forms a partial opposition to the views of God, and chiefly in the persons who are not entirely divested of the carnal impressions which make them consider as the source of good the objects that transmit it.

Not that we ought not to remember those persons from whom we have received any instructions, when these persons have been authorized to make them, as fathers, bishops, and confessors, because they are the masters of whom others are the disciples. But as to us, it is different; for as the angel refused the adoration of a holy servant like himself, we tell you, in entreating you no longer to use these terms of human gratitude, to refrain from paying us such compliments, since we are disciples like yourself.

The second is in respect to what you say of its being unnecessary to repeat these things to us, since we know them perfectly already; which causes us to fear that you do not distinguish clearly enough here between the things of which you speak and those of which the world speaks, since it is doubtless quite enough to have learned the latter once and retained them well to be no further instructed in them, while it does not suffice to have comprehended once those of the other kind and to have known them well, that is, by the internal impulse of God, to preserve the knowledge of them in the same degree, although we may retain the memory. Not that we may not remember and as easily retain an epistle of St. Paul as a book of Virgil; but the knowledge that we acquire in this manner, as well as its continuation, is only an effect of memory, while to understand this secret language, unknown to those who are not of Heaven, it is necessary that the same grace, which alone can give the first knowledge of it, shall continue and render it ever present by retracing it without ceasing in the hearts of the faithful to keep it constantly existing there; as God continually renews their beatitude in the blessed, which is an effect and a consequence of grace; as likewise the Church holds that the Father perpetually produces the Son and maintains the eternity of this essence

by an effusion of his substance, which is without interruption as well as without end.

Thus the continuation of the justice of the faithful is nothing else than the continuation of the infusion of grace, and not a single grace that subsists continually; and this it is that teaches us perfectly our perpetual dependence on the mercy of God, since if he suspends the course of it ever so slightly, barrenness necessarily becomes the result. In this necessity, it is easy to see that it is necessary to make new efforts continually to acquire this continual newness of spirit, since we can only preserve the former grace by the acquisition of a new grace, and since otherwise we shall lose what we think to retain, as those who wish to shut in the light shut in nothing but darkness. Thus we should watch unceasingly to purify the interior, which is constantly sullied by new spots while retaining the old ones, since without this assiduous renovation we shall be incapable of receiving that new wine that cannot be put into old bottles.

For this reason you should not fear to place before our eyes the things which we have in our memory, and which it is necessary to cause to enter into the heart, since it is unquestionable that your discourse can better serve as the instrument of grace than can the impression of it that remains in our memory, since grace is especially accorded to prayer, and since this charity that you have had for is among those prayers that ought never to be interrupted. Thus we never should refuse to read or to hear holy things, however common or well-known they may be; for our memory as well as the instructions which it contains, is only an inanimate and Judaical body without the spirit that should vivify them. And it often happens that God avails himself of these exterior means to make them understood and to leave so much the less food for the vanity of men when they thus receive grace in themselves. Thus, a book or a sermon, however common it may be, brings much more profit to him who hears or reads it with better disposition than does the excellence of the most elevated discourses which usually bring more pleasure than instruction; and it is sometimes seen that those who listen as they ought, although ignorant and almost stupid, are touched by the

simple name of God and the words that menace them with hell, although these may be all that they comprehend and although they knew it as well before.

The third is in respect to what you say about only writing things to make us understand that you share the same feeling. We have equally to praise and to thank you on this subject; we praise you for your perseverance and thank you for the testimony that you give us of it. We had already drawn this confession from M. Perier, and the things that we induced him to say had assured us of it: we can only tell you how much we are pleased by representing to you the joy which you would receive if you should hear the same thing of us.

We have nothing in particular to tell you, except touching the design of your house. We know that M. Perier is too earnest in what he undertakes to fully think of two things at once, and that the entire design is of such magnitude that, in order to complete it, he must remain a long time without thinking of any thing else. We know, too, that his project is only for a part of the building; but this, besides being only too large alone, engages for the completion of the rest as soon as there shall be no farther obstacles to it, however determined he may be to the contrary, especially if he employs the time in building that it would take to undeceive him of the secret pleasure that he finds in it. Thus we have counselled him to build much less than he intended, and only what is actually necessary, although according to the same design, in order that he may not have cause to become absorbed in it, nor yet deprive himself of the opportunity of doing so. We entreat you to think seriously of it, and to resolve to counsel him likewise, lest it may happen that he may be far more prudent and bestow much more care and pains in the building of an earthly house than he is obliged to bestow on that mystic tower, of which you know St. Augustine speaks in one of his letters, which he has promised to finish in his conversations. Adieu. B. P. — J. P.

Postscript of Jacqueline. — I hope shortly to write you the particulars of my own affair, of which I shall send you the details; meanwhile, pray to God for the result.

If you know any pious soul, let him pray to God for me also.

Letter to Madame Perier and Her Husband, on the Death of M. Pascal, Pere



OCTOBER 17, 1651.

AS you are both now informed of our common misfortune, and as the letter which we commenced has given you some consolation by the recital of the happy circumstances that accompanied the subject of our affliction, I cannot refuse to you those which remain in my mind, and which I pray God to give me, and to recall to me several which we formerly received from his grace, and which have been newly given to us by our friends on this occasion.

I know not now where my first letter ended. My sister sent it away without noticing that it was not finished. It only seems to me that it contained in substance some particulars of the conduct of God over life and sickness, which I would repeat to you here, so deeply are they engraven in my heart, and so solid is the consolation that they bring me, if you could not have seen them yourselves in the preceding letter, and if my sister did not intend to make to you a more exact recital of them at her earliest con-venience. I shall, therefore, only speak to you here of the conclusion which I draw from them, which is that, except those who are interested by the feelings of nature, there is not a Christian who should not rejoice at it.

Upon this great foundation, I shall commence what I have to say to you by a remark that is very consoling to those who have sufficient liberty of spirit to conceive it in the midst of grief. It is that we should seek consolation in our ills, not in ourselves, not in men, not in any thing that is created; but in God. And the reason is, that all creatures are not the first cause of the accidents that we call evils; but that the providence of God being the only and veritable cause, the arbiter and the sovereign of them, it is indubitable that we must resort directly to

the source and go back to the origin to find a solid alleviation. If we follow this precept, and if we regard this event, not as an effect of chance, not as a fatal necessity of nature, not as the play of the elements and parts of which man is composed (for God has not abandoned his elect to caprice and chance), but as a result indispensable, inevitable, just, holy, useful to the good of the Church, and to the exaltation of the name and the greatness of God, of a decree of his providence conceived from all eternity to be executed in the plenitude of its time in such a year, such a day, such an hour, such a place, such a manner; and, in short, that all that has happened has been from all time foreknown and foreordained of God; if, I say, through a transport of grace, we regard this accident, not in itself and apart from God, but apart from itself, and in the inmost part of the will of God, in the justice of his decree, in the order of his providence, which is the true cause of it, without which it would not have happened, through which alone it has happened, and in the manner in which it has happened; we shall adore in humble silence the impenetrable loftiness of his secrets, we shall venerate the sanctity of his decrees, we shall bless the acts of his providence, and, uniting our will to that of God himself, we shall wish with him, in him, and for him, the thing that he has willed in us and for us from all eternity.

Let us regard it, then, in this manner, and let us prac-tice this precept, which I learned of a great man in the time of our deepest affliction, that there is no consolation except in truth alone. It is certain that Socrates and Seneca have nothing consolatory on such an occasion as this. They have been in the error that has blinded all men in the beginning: they have all taken death as natural to man; and all the discourses which they have founded upon this false principle are so futile that they only serve to demonstrate by their inutility how weak man is in general, since the most elevated productions of the greatest among men are so weak and puerile. It is not the same with Jesus Christ, it is not thus in the canonical books: the truth is there revealed, and consolation is also as infallibly joined with it as it is infallibly separated from error.

Let us, then, consider death in the truth which the Holy Spirit has taught us. We have this admirable advantage, of knowing that death is really and actually a penalty of sin imposed on man in order to expiate his crime, necessary to man to purge him from sin; that it is the only one that can deliver the soul from the concupiscence of the members, without which saints come not into the world. We know that life, and the life of Christians, is a continual sacrifice, that can only be completed by death; we know that as Jesus Christ, being in the world, regarded and offered himself to God as a sacrifice, and a veritable victim; as his birth, his life, his death, his resurrection, his ascension, his presence in the Eucharist, and his eternal seat at the right hand are only a sole and single sacrifice; we know that what has been accomplished in Jesus Christ should be accomplished also in all his members.

Let us, then, consider life as a sacrifice; and let the accidents of life make no impression upon the minds of Christians, except in proportion as they interrupt or accomplish this sacrifice. Let us only call that evil which renders the victim of God the victim of the devil, but let us call that good which renders the victim of the devil in Adam the victim of God; and by this rule let us examine the nature of death.

For this consideration it is necessary to have recourse to the person of Jesus Christ, for all that is in men is abominable, and as God looks upon men only through the mediator Jesus Christ, men should also look neither upon others nor themselves except mediately through Jesus Christ. For if we do not take this course, we shall find in ourselves nothing but veritable misfortunes, or abominable pleasures, but if we regard all things in Jesus Christ, we shall find full consolation, full satisfaction, and full edification.

Let us, then, consider death in Jesus Christ, and not without Jesus Christ. Without Jesus Christ it is horrible, detestable, the horror of nature. In Jesus Christ it is altogether different; it is benignant, holy, the joy of the faithful. Every thing is sweet in Jesus Christ, even to death: and this is why he suffered and died to sanctify death and suffering and, in common with God and man, he has been all

that was great, and all that was abject, in order to sanctify in himself all things except sin, and to be the model of every condition.

To consider the nature of death, and of death in Jesus Christ, it is necessary to see what rank it holds in his continual and uninterrupted sacrifice, and for this to remark that in sacrifices the most important part is the death of the victim. The oblation and sanctification which precede are the details; but the accomplishment is the death, in which, by the annihilation of life, the creature renders to God all the homage of which it is capable, in annihilating itself before the face of his majesty, and in adoring his sovereign existence, which alone exists in reality. It is true that there is another part, after the death of the victim, without which its death would be useless, that is, God's acceptance of the sacrifice. This is what is said in the Scripture: *Et odotatus est Dominus suavitatem.* "And the Lord smelled a sweet sacrifice." This it is that really consummates the oblation; but it is rather an action of God towards the creature than of the creature towards God, and does not hinder the last act of the creature from being death.

All these things have been accomplished in Jesus Christ In entering the world, he offered himself: *Obtulit semetipsum per Spiritum Sanctum. Ingrediens mundum, dixit: Hostiam noluisti… Tunc dixi: Ecce venio. In capite,* etc. "Through the Eternal Spirit he offered himself. When he cometh into the world, he saith, sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not. Then said I, Lo, come." This is his oblation. His sanctification was immediate upon his oblation. This sacrifice lasted all his life, and was accomplished by his death. "Ought he not to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" "Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." But "in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong cries and tears unto him that was able to save, he was heard in that he feared:" and God raised him from the dead, and sent him his glory, prefigured formerly by the fire from heaven that fell upon the victim to burn and consume his body, and to make it live the spiritual life of glory. This is what Jesus Christ has obtained, and what has been accomplished through his resurrection.

Thus this sacrifice being perfected by the death of Christ, and consummated even in his body by his resurrection, in which the image of sinful flesh was absorbed by glory, Jesus Christ had wholly finished his part; it remained only that the sacrifice should be accepted of God, that, as the smoke ascended and carried the-odor to the throne of God, thus Jesus Christ was, in this state of perfect immolation, offered, carried to, and accepted at the throne of God himself: and this it is that has been accomplished in the ascension, in which he mounted on high and by his own power and by the power of his Holy Spirit, which surrounded him on every side, was carried away; as the smoke of the victims, the emblem of Jesus Christ, was carried on high by the air that sustained it, the type of the Holy Spirit: and the Acts of the Apostles indicate to us expressly that he was received up into heaven, in order to assure us that this holy sacrifice accomplished on earth was welcome and acceptable to God, and was received into the bosom of God, to shine in glory through ages upon ages.

This is the state of things as regards our sovereign Lord. Let us consider them now in ourselves. From the moment we enter the Church, which is the world of the Faithful and especially of the elect, into which Jesus Christ entered at the moment of his incarnation by a privilege peculiar to the only Son of God, we are offered and sacrificed. This sacrifice is continued by life and completed at death, in which the soul truly quitting all vices, and the love of the world, with the contagion of which it is always infected throughout life, achieves its immolation and is received into the bosom of God.

Let us not grieve then like the heathen who have no hope We did not lose our father at the moment of his death: we lost him so o say, when he entered the Church through baptism. From that time, he belonged to God; his life was devoted to God; his actions regarded the world only for God. In his death, he became totally separated from sin and it was at that moment that he was accepted by God and that his sacrifice received its accomplishment and its consummation. He has performed therefore what he had vowed: he has finished the work that God had given him to do; he has accomplished the only thing for which he was

created. The will of God is accomplished in him, and his will is absorbed in God. Let not our will then separate what God has joined together; and let us stifle or moderate, by the understanding of truth, the feelings of a corrupt and fallen nature which has only false images, and which troubles by its illusions the sanctity of the feelings which truth and the Gospel should give us.

Let us then no longer look upon death like the heathen, but like Christians, that is with hope, as St. Paul commands, since this is the especial privilege of Christians. Let us no longer regard a corpse as putrid carrion because deceitful nature figures it thus; but as the inviolable and eternal temple of the Holy Spirit, as faith teaches. For we know that sainted bodies are inhabited by the Holy Spirit until the resurrection, which will be caused by virtue of this spirit which dwells in them for this effect. It is for this reason that we honor the relics of the dead, and it was on this true principle that the Eucharist was formerly placed in the mouth of the dead, since, as it was known that they were he temple of the Holy Spirit, it was believed that they also merited to be united to this holy sacrament. But the Church has changed this custom, not in order that these bodies shall not be holy, but for the reason that the Eucharist being the bread of life and of the living, it ought not to be given to a, the dead.

Let us no longer regard a man as having ceased to live although nature suggests it; but as beginning to live, as truth assures. Let us no longer regard his soul as perished and reduced to nothingness, but as quickened and united to the sovereign life; and let us thus correct, by attention to these truths, the sentiments of error so deeply imprinted in ourselves and those emotions of honor so natural to mankind.

To subdue this dread more effectually, it is necessary fully to comprehend its origin; and to paint it to you in a few words, I am forced to tell you in general what is the source of all vice and all sin. This I have learned from two very great and holy personages. The truth covered by this mystery is that God has created man with two loves, the one for God, the other for himself; but with this law, that

the love for God shall be infinite, that is without any other limits than God himself; and that the love for self shall be finite and relating to God.

Man in this state not only loves himself without sin, but could not do otherwise than love himself without sin.

Since, sin being come, man has lost the first of these loves; and the love for himself being left alone in this great soul capable of an infinite love, this self-love has extended and overflowed in the empty space which the love of God has quitted — and thus he loves himself alone, and all things for himself, that is, infinitely. This is the origin of self-love. It was natural to Adam and just in his innocence; but it became criminal and immoderate after his sin.

Here is the source of this love, and the cause of its defect and of its excess. It is the same with the passion of ruling, of indolence; and others. The application is easy. Let us come to our single subject. The dread of death was natural to innocent Adam, because, his life being pleasing to God, it must have been pleasing to man: and death was terrible when it ended a life conformed to the will of God. Since, man having sinned, his life has become corrupt, his body and soul enemies to each other, and both to God. This horrible change having infected so holy a life, the love of life has nevertheless remained; and the dread of death being equally felt, that which was just in Adam is unjust and criminal in us.

Such is the origin of the dread of death and the cause of its faultiness. Let us then illumine the error of nature by the light of faith. The dread of death is natural, but it is in the state of innocence; death in truth is terrible, but it is when it puts an end to a pure life. It was just to hate it when it separated a holy soul from a holy body; but it is just to love it when it separates a holy soul from an impure body. It was just to flee it, when it broke the peace between the body and he soul; but not when it calms the irreconcilable dissension between them. In short, when it afflicted an innocent body, when it took away from the body the liberty of honoring God, when it separated from the soul a body submissive to and co-operative with its will, when it put an end to all the good of which man is capable, it was just to abhor it; but when it puts an end to an impure life, when it takes

away from the body the liberty of sinning, when it delivers the soul from a powerful rebel that contradicts all the motives for its salvation, it is very unjust to preserve the same feelings.

Let us not therefore relinquish this love for life which nature has given us, since we have received it from God; but let this be for the same life for which God has given it to us and not for a contrary object. In consenting to the love that Adam had for his innocent life and that Jesus Christ himself had for his own, let us bring ourselves to hate a life contrary to that which Jesus Christ has loved, and only to fear the death which Jesus Christ has feared, which comes to a body pleasing to God; but not to fear a death that, punishing a guilty body, and purging a vicious body, ought to give us quite contrary feelings, if we have any thing of faith, of hope, and of charity.

It is one of the great principles of Christianity that every thing that happened to Jesus Christ should take place in the soul and the body of each Christian: that as Jesus Christ suffered during his mortal life, died to this mortal life, was raised to a new life, ascended to heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father; so the body and soul should suffer, die, be raised from the dead, ascend to heaven, and sit at the right hand of God. All these things are accomplished in the soul during life, but not in the body. The soul suffers and dies to sin in penitence and in baptism ; the soul i raised again to a new life in the same baptism; the soul quits the earth and ascends to heaven at death, and takes its seat at the right hand of God at the time that he appoints. None of these things happen to the body during this life; but the same things befall it afterwards. For at death the body dies to its mortal life; at the judgment it will rise to a new life; after the judgment, it will ascend to heaven and will sit at the right hand of God. Thus the same things happen to the body and the soul, but at different times; and the changes of the body come only when those of the soul are accomplished, that is at the hour of death: so that death is the consummation of the beatitude of the soul and the commencement of the beatitude of the body.

These are the admirable ways of the wisdom of God for the salvation of his saints, and St. Augustine teaches us on this subject, that God has arranged them in this wise for fear that if the body of man should die and rise again forever at baptism, men would only enter into the obedience of the Gospel through the love of life; whilst the grandeur of faith shines forth far more when it tends to immortality through the shades of death.

This is, certainly, our belief and the faith that we profess, and I believe that there is in this more than is needed to aid your consolations by my small efforts. I should not undertake to carry you this aid of myself; but as these are only repetitions of what I have learned, I give them with assurance, praying God to bless these seeds, and to give them growth, for without him we can do nothing, and his most holy words will not take root in us, as he himself has said.

It is not that I wish that you should be without feeling; the blow is too sensible; it would be even insupportable without supernatural aid. It is not therefore right that we should be without grief, like the angels who have no sentiment of nature; neither is it right that we should be without consolation, like the heathen who have no sentiment of grace: but it is right that we should be afflicted and consoled like Christians, and that the consolations of grace should overcome the feelings of nature; that we should say with the apostles: “We are afflicted but not cast down,” in order that grace may not only be in us but victorious in us; that thus, in sanctifying the name of our Father, his will may be made ours; that his grace may reign and prevail over nature, and that our afflictions may be as the substance of a sacrifice which his grace perfects and annihilates for the glory of God; and that these individual sacrifices may honor and precede the universal sacrifice wherein all nature should be perfected by the power of Jesus Christ. Thus we derive advantage from our own imperfections, since they serve as material for this sacrifice; for it is the aim of true Christians to profit by their own imperfections, because “ all things work together for good to the elect.”

And if we pay close attention to this, we shall find great advantages for our edification, in considering the thing truly as we said just now. For, since it is true

that the death of the body is only the type of that of the soul, and since we build upon the principle that in this chance we have all possible reason to hope for its sure salvation, it is certain that if we cannot arrest the progress of grief, we should derive this benefit, that since the death of the body is so terrible that it causes in us such emotions, that of the soul ought to cause in us those far more inconsolable. God sends us the first, God turns away the second. Let us then consider the greatness of our blessings in the greatness of our ills, and let the excess of our grief be in proportion to that of our joy.

There is nothing that can moderate it, except the fear that he may languish for some time in the pains which are destined to purge the remains of the sin of this life, and we ought carefully to apply ourselves to appease the anger of God towards him. Prayer and sacrifices are a sovereign remedy for his pains. But I have learned of a holy man in our affliction that one of the most solid and useful charities towards the dead is to do the things that they would command were they still in the world, to practise the holy advice which they have given us, and put ourselves, for their sakes, in the condition in which they would wish us at present. By this practice, we shall in some sort revive them in ourselves, since their counsels are still living and acting within us; and as heresiarchs are punished in the other life for the sins into which they have drawn their votaries, in whom their venom is still living, so the dead are recompensed, exclusive of their own merit, for those to whom they have given succession by their counsels and their example.

Let us strive then with all our power to revive him in us before God; and let us console ourselves in the union of our hearts, in which it seems to me that he still lives, and that our reunion in some sort restores to us his presence, as Jesus Christ makes himself present in the assembly of his faithful.

I pray God to form and to maintain these sentiments in us, and to continue those which it appears to me he has given ; me, of having more tenderness than ever for you and for my sister; for it seems to me that the love that we had for my father ought not to be lost, and that we should make a division of it among

ourselves, and that we should chiefly inherit the affection which he bore to us, to love each other still more cordially if possible.

I pray God to strengthen us in these resolutions, and in this hope I entreat you to permit me to give you a counsel which indeed you could take without me; but I shall not refrain from giving it. It is that after having found grounds of consolation for him, we shall not come to lack i! them for ourselves by dwelling upon the need and the utility that we shall have of his presence.

It is I who am the most interested in it. If I had lost him six years ago, I should have lost myself, and although I believe my necessity of him at present to be less absolute, I know that he would still have been necessary to me ten years and useful all my life. But we should hope that God having ordered it in such a time, such a place and such a manner, it is doubtless the most expedient for his glory and for our salvation.

However strange this may appear, I believe that we should regard all events in the same manner, and that, however sinister they may appear to us, we should hope that God would draw from them a source of joy to us if we will but intrust the direction of them to him. We know of persons of condition who have feared the death of relatives which God has perhaps averted at their prayer, who have caused or been the occasion of so much misery that there was reason to wish that the prayers had not been granted.

Man is assuredly too weak to judge soundly of the result of future things. Let us therefore hope in God, and let us not weary ourselves by rash and indiscreet forecasts. Let us commit ourselves then to God for the direction of our lives; and that grief may not prevail within us.

St. Augustine teaches us that there is in every man a serpent, an Eve and an Adam. The serpent is the senses and our nature, the Eve is the concupiscible appetite, and the Adam is the reason. Nature tempts us continually, concupiscible appetite often fills us with desires, but the sin is not consummated if reason does not consent. Let the serpent and the Eve therefore act if we cannot hinder it; but let us pray to God that his grace may so strengthen our Adam that he may remain

victorious; and that Jesus Christ may be the conqueror over him and may reign eternally in us. Amen.

Extract from a Letter of M. Pascal to M. Perier



PARIS, *FRIDAY, JUNE* 6, 1653

I HAVE just received your letter, inclosing that of my sister, which I have not had leisure to read, and moreover believe that this would be useless.

My sister made her profession yesterday, Thursday, the 5th of June, 1653. It was impossible for me to delay her: the Messieurs of Port Royal feared that a slight delay might bring on a greater one, and wished t hasten it for the reason that they hope ere long to put her in office; and consequently, it was necessary to hasten, because for this several years of profession are needed. This is the way they paid me. In fine, I could not, etc.

Extract from a Letter to Madame Perier, upon the Projected Marriage of Mademoiselle Jacqueline Perier

1659.



IN general, their advice was that you could in no way, t without mortally wounding charity and your conscience, and rendering yourself guilty of one of the greatest crimes, pledge a child of her age and innocence, and even of her piety, to the most perilous and lowest of the conditions of ! Christianity. That indeed, according to the world, the affair had no difficulty, and she was to conclude it without hesitation; but that according to God, she had less difficulty in it, and she was to reject it without hesitation, because the condition of an advantageous marriage is as desirable in the opinion of the world as it is vile and prejudicial in the sight of God. That not knowing to what she may be called, nor whether her temperament may not be so tranquil that she can support her virginity with piety, it were little to know the ; value of it to pledge her to lose this good so desirable to every one in himself, and so desirable to fathers and mothers for their children, since as they can no longer desire it for themselves, it is in them that they should strive to render to God what they have lost in general for other causes than for God.

Besides, that husbands, although rich and wise in the opinion of the world, are in truth complete pagans in the sight of God; so that the last words of these gentlemen are that to pledge a child to an ordinary man is a species of homicide and a deicide as it were in their own persons.

Note from Pascal to the Marchioness de Sable



DECEMBER, 1660.

ALTHOUGH I am much embarrassed, I can no longer defer rendering you a thousand thanks for having procured me the acquaintance of M. Menjot; for it is doubtless to you, Madame, that I owe it; and as I esteemed him highly already from the things which my sister had told me of him, I cannot tell you with how much joy I have received the favor which he has wished to render me. It is only necessary to read his letter to see how much intellect and judgment he possesses; and although I may not be capable of understanding the depth of the matters which he treats in his book, I will tell you, nevertheless, Madame, that I have learned much from the manner in which he reconciles in a few words the immateriality of the soul with the power of matter to change its functions and to cause delirium. I am very impatient to have the honor to converse with you on it.

Fragment of a Letter to M. Perier

1661.



YOU give me pleasure by sending me all the details of your controversies, and chiefly because you are interested therein; for I imagine that you do not imitate our controversialists of this country, who avail themselves so badly, at least so it seems to me, of the advantage which God offers them of suffering something for the establishment of his truths. For, if this were for the establishment of their truths, they would not act differently; and it seems that they are ignorant that the same Providence that has inspired some with light, has refused it to others; and it seems that in laboring to persuade them of it they are serving another God than the one who permits the obstacles that oppose their progress. They think to render service to God by murmuring against the hindrances, as if this were another power that should excite their piety, and another that should give vigor to those who oppose them.

This is what comes of self-will. When we wish by our own efforts that something shall succeed, we become irritated with obstacles, because we feel in these hindrances that the motive that makes us act has not placed them there, and we find things in them which the self-will that makes us act has not formed there.

But when God inspires our actions, we never feel any thing outside that does not come from the same principle that causes us to act; there is no opposition in the motive that impels us; the same motive power which leads us to act, leads others to resist us, or permits them at least; so that as we find no difference in this, and as it is not our own will that combats external events, but the same will that produces the good and permits the evil, this uniformity does not trouble the peace of the soul, and is one of the best tokens that we are acting by the will of God,

since it is much more certain that God permits the evil, however great it may be, than that God causes the good in us (and not some secret motive), however great it may appear to us; so that in order really to perceive whether it is God that makes us act, it is much better to test ourselves by our deportment without than by our motives within, since if we only examine ourselves within, although we may find nothing but good there, we cannot assure ourselves that this good comes truly from God. But when we examine ourselves without, that is when we consider whether we suffer external hindrances with patience, this signifies that there is a uniformity of will between the motive power that inspires our passions and the one that permits the resistance to them; and as there is no doubt that it is God who permits the one, we have a right humbly to hope that it is God who produces the other.

But what! we act as if it were our mission to make truth triumph whilst it is only our mission to combat for it. The desire to conquer is so natural that when it is covered by the desire of making the truth triumph, we often take the one for the other, and think that we are seeking the glory of God when in truth we are seeking our own. It seems to me that the way in which we support these hindrances is the surest token of it, for in fine if we wish only the order established by God, it is certain that we wish the triumph of his justice as much as that of his mercy, and that when it does not come of our negligence, we shall be in an equal mood, whether the truth be known or whether it be combated, since in the one the mercy of God triumphs, and in the other, his justice.

Pater juste, mundus te non cognovit. Righteous father, the world has not known thee. Upon which St. Augustine says that it is through his justice that the world has not known him. Let us pray, labor, and rejoice evermore, as St. Paul says.

If you had reproved me in my first faults, I should not have been guilty of this, and should have been moderate. But I shall not suppress this any more than the other; you can suppress it yourself if you wish. I could not refrain, so angry am I against those who insist absolutely that the truth shall be believed when they

demonstrate it, which Jesus Christ did not do in his created humanity. It is a mockery, and it seems to me treating… I am grieved on account of the malady of M. de Laporte. I assure you that I honor him with all my heart. I, etc.

Letter to Madame Perier

(Addressed: A Mademoiselle Périer la Conseillère.)



ROUEN, SATURDAY, THE last of January, 1643.

MY DEAR SISTER,

I doubt not that you have been greatly troubled at the length of time in which you have received no news from these parts. But I think that you must have suspected that the journey of the Elus has been the cause, as in fact it was. Had it not been for this, I should not have failed to write to you oftener. I have to tell you that messieurs the commissioners being at Gizors, my father made me take a tour to Paris, where I found a letter which you had written, in which you say that you are surprised that I reproach you that you do not write often enough, and in which you tell me that you write to Rouen once every week. It is very certain, if this is so, that the letters are lost, for I do not receive one once in three weeks. On my return to Rouen, I found a letter from M. Périer, who writes that you are ill. He does not write whether your sickness is dangerous or whether you are better; and an unusual length of time has passed since without having received any letter, so that we are in an anxiety from which I pray you to relieve us as soon as possible; but I think the prayer I make you will be useless, for before you shall have received this letter, I hope that we shall have received letters from you or from M. Périer. The department is finished, God be praised. If I knew of any thing new, I would let you know it. I am, my dear sister, etc.

Postscript in the handwriting of Etienne Pascal, the father: “My dear daughter will excuse me if I do not write to her as I wished, having no leisure for it; for I have never been in a tenth part the perplexity that I am at present. I could not be more so without being overwhelmed; for the last four months I have not been in bed six times before two o’clock in the morning.

“I lately commenced a jesting letter upon the subject of your last, concerning the marriage of M. Desjeux, but I have never had leisure to finish it. For news, the daughter of M. de Paris, *Maître des comptes,* the wife of M. de Neufirlle, also *Maître des comptes,* is dead, as well as the daughter of Belair, the wife of young Lambert. Your little boy slept here last night. He is very well, thank God.

“I am ever your true and affectionate friend,

“PASCAL.”

Your very humble and affectionate servant and brother,

PASCAL.

Note from Pascal to His Sister, Madame Perier

(Superscribed, To Mademoiselle Périer, at Clermont, in Auvergne.)



MY DEAR SISTER,

I do not believe that it is quite right that you should be vexed; for, if you are not so because we have forgotten you, than you ought not to be at all. I tell you no news, for there is too much that is general, and there must always be too much that is private. I should have much to tell you that happens in complete secrecy, but I regard it as useless to send it to you; all that I pray you is, to mingle acts of grace with the prayers which you make for me, and which I entreat you to multiply at this time. I carried your letter myself with the aid of God, in order that it might be forwarded to Madame de Maubuisson. They gave me a little book, in which this sentence was written with the hand. I know not whether it is in the little book of sentences, but it is beautiful. I am so much hurried that I can say no more. Do not fail in your fasts. Adieu.

Letters to Mademoiselle de Roannez

I



1656.

IN order to answer all the points upon which you address me, and, indeed, to write, although my time is limited.

I am delighted that you like the book of M. de Laval, and the Meditations on Grace; I draw from this important conclusions for what I desire.

I send the details of this condemnation which had frightened you: it is nothing at all, thank God, and it is a miracle that nothing worse is done, since the enemies of truth have the power and the will to oppress him. Perhaps you are of those who merit not to be abandoned by God, and removed from an undeserving world, and he is assured that you will serve the Church by your prayers, if the Church has served you by hers. For it is the Church that merits with Jesus Christ, who is inseparable from her, the conversion of all those who are not in the truth; and it is in turn these converted persons who succor the mother who has delivered them. I praise with all my heart the little zeal that I have recognized in your letter for the union with the pope. The body is not more living without the head, than the head without the body. Whoever separates himself from the one or the other is no longer of the body, and belongs no more to Jesus Christ. I know not whether there are persons in the Church more attached to this unity of body than those that you call ours. We know that all the virtues, martyrdom the austerities and all good works are useless out of the Church, and out of communion with the head of the Church, which is the pope. I will never separate myself from his communion, at least I pray God to give me this grace, without which I should be lost forever.

I make to you a sort of profession of faith, and I know not wherefore; but I would neither efface it nor commence it again.

M. Du Gas has spoken to me this morning of your letter with as much astonishment and joy as it is possible to have: he knows not where you have taken what he has reported to me of your words; he has said to me surprising things, that no longer surprise me so much. I begin to accustom myself to you and to the grace that God gives you, and nevertheless I avow to you that it is to me always new, as it is always new in reality.

For it is a continual flow of graces that the Scripture compares to a river, and to the light which the sun continually emits from itself, and is always new, so that if it ceased an instant to emit them, all that we have received would disappear, and we should remain in darkness.

He has said to me that he had begun a response to you, and that he would transcribe it to render it more legible, and that, at the same time, he would extend it. But he has just sent it to me with a little note, wherein he informs me that he has been able neither to transcribe it nor to extend it; this makes me think that it will be ill-written. But I am a witness of his want of leisure, and of his desire that he had leisure for your sake.

I take part in the joy that the affair of the…' will afford you, for I see clearly that you are interested for the Church: you are indeed under obligations to her. For sixteen hundred years she has groaned for you. It is time to groan for her and for us altogether, and to give her all that remains to us of life, since Jesus Christ has assumed life only to lose it for her and for us.

II

OCTOBER, 1656.

IT seems to me that you take sufficient interest in the miracle to send you particular notice that its verification is consummated by the Church, as you will see by the sentence of the grand vicar.

There are so few persons to whom God would manifest himself by these extraordinary acts, that we ought indeed to profit by these occasions, since he does not leave the secrecy of the nature that covers him but to excite our faith to serve him with so much the more ardor as we know him with the more certainty.

If God discovered himself continually to men, there would be no merit in believing him; and, if he never discovered himself, there would be little faith. But he conceals himself ordinarily and discovers himself rarely to those whom he wishes to engage in his service. This strange secrecy, in which God is impenetrably withdrawn from the sight of men, is a great lesson to betake ourselves to solitude far from the sight of men. He remained concealed under the veil of the nature that covers him till the Incarnation; and when it was necessary that he should appear, he concealed himself still the more in covering himself with humanity. He was much more recognizable when he was invisible than when he rendered himself visible. And in fine, when he wished to fulfil the promise that he made to his apostles to remain with men until his final coming, he chose to remain in the strangest and most obscure secret of all, which are the species of the Eucharist. It is this sacrament that St. John calls in the Apoc-alypse *a concealed manner;* and I believe that Isaiah saw it in that state, when he said in the spirit of prophecy: *Truly thou art a God concealed.* This is the last secrecy wherein he can be. The veil of nature that covers God has been penetrated by some of the unbelieving, who, as St. Paul says, have recognized an invisible God in visible nature. Heretical Christians have recognized him through his humanity and adored Jesus Christ God and man. But to recognize him under the species of bread is peculiar to Catholics alone: none but us are thus enlightened by God. We may add to these considerations the secrecy of the spirit of God concealed still in the Scripture. For there are two perfect senses, the literal and the mystical; and the Jews, stopping at the one, do not even think that there is another, and take no thought for searching it out, just as the impious, seeing natural effects, attribute them to nature, without thinking that there is another author, and, as the Jews, seeing a ‘ perfect man in Jesus Christ, have not thought to seek in , him another

nature: *We had not thought that it was he,* again says Isaiah: and just as, in fine, the heretics, seeing the perfect appearances of bread in the Eucharist, do not think to see it in another substance. All things cover some mystery; all things have veils that cover God. Christians ought to recognize him in every thing. Temporal afflictions cover eternal goods to which they lead. Temporal joys cover eternal ills that they cause. Let us pray God to make us recognize and serve him in every thing; let us give him countless thanks that, having concealed himself in all things for others, he has discovered himself in all things and in so many ways for us.

III

I KNOW not how you have taken the loss of your letters. I could wish indeed that you may have taken it as you ought. It is time to begin to judge of what is good or bad by the will of God, who can be neither unjust nor blind, and not by our own, which is always full of malice and error. If you have , had these sentiments, I shall be greatly pleased, inasmuch as you will have received consolation for a more valid reason than that which I have to communicate to you, which is that I hope that they are found again. That of the 5th has already been brought to me; and although it is not the most important (for that of M. du Gas is more so), nevertheless this makes me hope to recover the other.

I know not why you complain that I have written nothing for you, — I do not separate you two, and continually think of both. You see plainly that my other letters, and this also, refer sufficiently to you. In truth, I cannot refrain from telling you that I could wish to be infallible in my judgments; you would not be badly off if that were the case, for I am very much pleased with you; but my judgment is nothing. I say this with reference to the manner in which I see you speak of that good persecuted friar, and of what … does. I am not surprised to see M. N. interested in the matter, I am accustomed to his zeal, but yours is wholly new; this new language is usually the product of a new heart. Jesus Christ has given in the Church this sign whereby to recognize those who have faith, — that

they shall speak a new language — and in fact the renewal of thoughts and desires causes that of discourse. What you say of days passed in solitude, and the consolation afforded you by reading, are things that M. N. will he extremely happy to know when I shall make him acquainted with them, and my sister also. These certainly are new things, but they must be unceasingly renewed, for this newness, which cannot be displeasing to God as the old man cannot be pleasing to him, is different from earthly novelties, inasmuch as worldly things, however new they may be, grow old as they endure; whilst this new spirit is renewed the more, the longer it endures. Our old man perishes, says St. Paul, and is renewed day by day, and will be perfectly new only in eternity, when shall be sung without ceasing that new song of which David speaks in the Psalms; that is the song that springs from the new spirit of love.

I will tell you for news, of what concerns these two persons, that I clearly perceive their zeal does not grow cold; this surprises me, for it is much more rare to see continuation in piety than to see entrance upon it. I have them always in mind, especially her of the miracle, because there is something in her case more extraordinary, although the other may be also very extraordinary and almost without example. It is certain that the graces conferred by God in this life are the measure of the glory prepared by him for the other. Thus when I foresee the end and crown of this work by the commencements that appear in pious persons, I feel a veneration that overcomes me with respect towards those whom he seems to have chosen for his elect. I confess to you that it seems to me that I see them already on one of those thrones where those who shall have left all will judge , the world with Jesus Christ, according to the promise that he has made. But when I come to think that these same persons may fall, and be on the contrary, of the unfortunate number of the judged, and that there will be so many of them who will fall from glory and leave to others by their negligence the crown that God had offered them, I cannot ,t i bear the thought; and the distress that I should feel in seeing them in this eternal state of misery, after having imagined them with so much reason in the other state, makes me turn my mind from the idea and recur to

God in order to pray. him not to abandon the weak creatures that he has acquired, and to say to him for the two persons whom you know what the Church says to-day with St. Paul: *O Lord, do thou complete that work which thou thyself hast commenced.* St. Paul often regarded himself in these two states, and it is what makes him say elsewhere: *I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest when I have preached to others, I myself be a castaway.* I end therefore with these words of Job: *I have always feared the Lord like the waves of a raging sea and swollen to engulf me.* And elsewhere: *Happy is the man that feareth always!*

IV

IT is very certain that separation never takes place without pain. We do not feel our bond when we voluntarily follow the object that leads us, as St. Augustine says; but when we begin to resist and draw back, we suffer; the bond stretches and suffers violence; and this bond is our body, which is broken but by death. Our Lord has said that *since the com-ing of John the Baptist,* that is, since his coming in each of the faithful, *the kingdom of heaven suffers violence and the violent take it by storm.* Before we are touched by the spirit we feel nothing but the burden of concupiscence that presses us to the earth. When God draws us on high, these two opposing efforts cause that violence which he alone can enable us to overcome. *But we can do all things,* says St. Leon, *with him, without whom we can do nothing.* We must then resolve to endure this warfare all our lives; for here there is no peace. *Christ came not to bring peace, but a sword.* Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that, as Scripture says, *the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God;* so it may be said that this warfare which appears hard to men is peace with God, for it is the peace which Jesus Christ himself has brought us. Yet it will not be perfected until the body shall be destroyed; and this it is which makes us wish for death, while we nevertheless cheerfully endure life for the love of him who has suffered both life and death for us, and who is able to give us more than we can ask or think, as says St. Paul in the Epistle of to-day.

V

GOD be praised, I have no more fears for you, but am full of hope! These are consoling words indeed of Jesus Christ: *To him that hath shall be given.* By this promise, those who have received much have the right to hope for more, and those who have received extraordinarily should hope extraordinarily. I try as much as I can to let nothing distress me, and to take every thing that happens as for the best. I believe that this is a duty, and that we sin in not doing so. For, in short, the reason why sins are sins is only because they are contrary to the will of God: and the essence of sin thus consisting in having a will opposed to that which we know to be of God, it is plain, it appears to me, that when he discovers his will to us by events, it would be a sin not to conform ourselves to it. I have learned that in every thing that happens there is something worthy of admiration, since the will of God is manifest in it. I praise him with all my heart for the continuation of his favors, for I see plainly that they do not diminish.

The affair of … does not go on very well: it is a thing that makes those tremble who are truly the children of God to see the persecution which is in preparation, not only against individuals (this would be little) but against the Truth. To speak truly, God is indeed abandoned. It appears to me that this is a time in which the service that we render ‘ him i very pleasing to him. He desires that we should judge of grace by nature, and thus we may be allowed to suppose that as a prince driven from his country by his subjects feels extreme tenderness for those who remain faithful to him amidst the public revolt, in the same manner, God looks with especial favor upon those who are at this time defending the purity of religion and morals, so warmly assailed. But there is this difference between the kings of the earth and the King of kings, that the princes do not render their subjects faithful, but find them so; whilst God never finds men other than unfaithful, and renders them faithful when they are so. So that while the kings of the earth are under signal obligations to those who adhere to their allegiance, it happens, on the contrary, that those who subsist in the service of God are

themselves infinitely indebted to him. Let us continue then to praise him for this , grace, if he has bestowed it upon us, for which we shall praise him throughout eternity, and let us pray that he may give us still more of it, and that he may look with pity upon us and upon the whole Church, outside of which there is nothing but malediction.

I am interested in the victim of persecution of whom you speak. I see plainly that God has reserved to himself some hidden servants, as he said to Elijah. I pray him that we may be of the number, and that in spirit, in sincerity, and in truth.

VI

WHATEVER may come of the affair of …, enough, thank God, has already been done to draw an admirable advantage from it against these accursed precepts. There is need that those who have taken any part in this should render great thanks to God and that their relatives and friends should pray to God for them that they may not fall from the great happiness and honor which he has bestowed on them. All the honors of the world are but the image of this; this alone is solid and real, and nevertheless it is useless without the right frame of heart. It is not bodily austerities nor mental exercises, but good impulses of the heart, which are of merit and which sustain the sufferings of the body and the mind. For in short two things are necessary for sanctification — sufferings and joys. St. Paul says that *we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.* This should console those who experience tribulation, since, being warned that the path to heaven which they seek is filled with it, they should rejoice at meeting tokens that they are in the right way. But these very sufferings are not without joys, and are never surmounted but by pleasure. For as those who forsake God to return to the world do it only because they find more enjoyment in the pleasures of the world than in those of a union with God, and because this conquering charm leads them away and, making them repent of their first choice, renders them *penitents of the devil,* according to the saying of Tertullian; so none would

ever quit the pleasures of the world to embrace the cross of Jesus Christ, did he not find more enjoyment in contempt, in poverty, in destitution, and in the scorn of men, than in the delights of sin. And thus, says Tertullian, *it must not be supposed that the Christian's life is a life of sadness.* We forsake pleasures only for others which are greater. *Pray without ceasing,* says St. Paul, *in every thing give thanks, rejoice evermore.* It is the joy of having found God that is the principle of the sorrow of having offended him, and of the whole change of life. He that finds a treasure in a field, according to Jesus Christ, has such joy that he goes directly and sells all that he has to purchase the field. The people of the world know nothing of this joy, *which the world can neither give nor take away,* as is said by Jesus Christ. The blessed have this joy without sorrow; the people of the world have their sorrows without this joy, and Christians have this joy mingled with the sorrow of having pursued other pleasures and the fear of losing it by the allurements of these same pleasures which tempt us without ceasing. And thus we should labor unceasingly to cherish this joy which moderates our fear, and to preserve this fear which preserves our joy, so that on feeling ourselves too much carried away by the one we may incline towards the other, and thus remain poised between the two. *In the day of prosperity be joyful; but in the day of adversity consider,* says the Scripture, and so it shall be till the promise of Jesus Christ shall be accomplished in us that our joy shall be full. Let us not then be cast down by sadness, nor believe that piety consists only in bitterness without consolation. The true piety, which is found perfect only in heaven, is so full of satisfactions that it overflows with them in its beginning, its progress, and its consummation. Its light is so shining that it is reflected on all about it; and if there is sadness mingled with it, especially at the outset, this comes from ourselves and not from virtue; for it is not the effect of the piety that is springing up in us, but of the impiety that still is there. Remove the impiety and the joy will be unalloyed. Let us not ascribe this then to devotion, but to ourselves and seek relief from it only through our correction.

VII

I AM very glad of the hope which you give me of the success of the affair which you fear may make you vain. There is something to fear in any case; for, were it successful, I should fear from it that evil sorrow of which St. Paul says that it leads to death, instead of that different one that leads to life.

It is certain that the matter was a thorny one, and that, hi/ if the person should be extricated from it, the result would give reason for some vanity, were it not that we had entreated it of God, and should therefore believe the good that comes of it his work. But if it should not succeed well, we ought not therefore to fall into despondency, for the same reason that having prayed to God in the affair, it is evident that he has taken it into his own hand; thus he must be regarded as the author of all good and of all evil, with the exception of sin. Thereupon I would repeat to the person the passage of Scripture to which I have before referred: *In the day of prosperity rejoice, but in the day of adversity consider.* Nevertheless, I must say to you in respect to the other person whom you know, who sends word that she has many things on her mind that trouble her, that I am very sorry to see her in this state. I am deeply grieved at her troubles, and should be glad to be able to relieve them; I entreat her not to anticipate the future, and to remember that, as our Lord has said, *Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.*

The past ought not to trouble us, since we have only to feel regret for our faults; but the future ought to concern us still less, since it is wholly beyond our control, and since perhaps we may not reach it at all. The present is the only time that is truly our own, and this we ought to employ according to the will of God. It is in this that our thoughts ought chiefly to be centred. Yet the world is so restless that men scarcely ever think of the present life and of the moment in which they are living, but of that in which they will live. In this manner we are always living in the future, and never in the present. Our Lord has willed that our foresight should not extend beyond the present day. These are the bounds within which we must keep both for our safety and for our own repose. For in truth, the Christian

precepts are those fullest of consolation, exceeding, I affirm, the maxims of the world.

I also foresee many troubles, both for that person, for others, and for myself. But I pray to God, when I find myself absorbed in these forebodings, to restrain me within my prescribed course. I call myself to an account, and I find that I am neglecting to do many things that I ought at present, in order to escape from useless thoughts. of the future on which, far from being obliged to dwell, it is on the contrary my duty not to dwell at all. It is only for want of not understanding how to know and study the present that we undertake to study the future. What I say here I say for myself, and not for that person who has assuredly more virtue and reflection than I; but I show him my defect to hinder him from falling into it: we sometimes correct ourselves better by the sight of evil than by the example of good; and it is well to accustom ourselves to profit by evil, since this is so common while goodness is so rare.

VIII

I PITY the person whom you know in the disquietude in which I know she is, and in which I am not surprised to see her. It is a little day of judgment which cannot come without a universal emotion of the person, as the general judgment will cause a general emotion in the world, those excepted who shall have already judged themselves, as she pretends to have done. This temporal suffering would guarantee her from the eternal, through the infinite merits of Jesus Christ, who has endured it and rendered it his own — this it is that should console her. Our yoke is also his own; without this it would be insupportable.

Take my yoke upon you, says he. It is not our yoke; it is his, and he also bears it. Know, says he, *that my yoke is easy and light.* It is light only to him and to his divine power. I would say to her that she should remember that these disquietudes come not from the good that is springing up in her, but from the evil which is still remaining and must be continually diminished; that she must do like a child that

is being torn by robbers from the arms of its mother who will not let it go; for it should not charge the mother that fondly holds it back with the violence that it suffers, but its unjust ravishers. The whole office of Advent is well fitted to give courage to the weak; these words of Scripture: *Take courage, ye fearful and unbelieving, behold, your Redeemer cometh,* are often repeated there, and in the vesper service of to-day it is said: "Take courage and fear not; for your God shall come to save and deliver you."

IX

YOUR letter has given me the greatest joy. I confess that I was beginning to fear or at least to be astonished. I know not what was the beginning of the trouble of which you speak; but I know that trouble must come. I was reading the thirteenth chapter of St. Mark. I was thinking of writing you; and I will tell you therefore what I found in it. Jesus Christ is there addressing a solemn discourse to his disciples on his second coming; and as whatever happens to the Church happens also to each individual Christian, it is certain that this whole chapter predicts the state of each person in whom on conversion the old man is destroyed, as well as that of the whole universe which shall be destroyed to give place to a new heaven and a new earth, as the Scripture says. And thus I should think that the overthrow of the reprobate temple, which prefigures the overthrow of the reprobate man within us, and of which it is said that there shall not be one stone left upon another, indicates that no passion of the old man shall remain; and these fierce contentions, both civil and domestic, represent so well the internal conflicts experienced by those who give themselves up to God, that nothing can be better depicted.

But very striking are these words: *When ye shall see the abomination of desolation in the holy place, let not him that is on the house-top go into the house.* It seems to me that this perfectly predicts the times in which we live, in which moral corruption is in the houses of sanctity and in the books of theologians and

ecclesiastics, in which we should least expect it. We must shun such disorder; and woe to those with child and to those that give suck in those days, that is to those that are held back by worldly ties! The words of a sainted woman are applicable here: “ We are not to consider whether we are called to quit the world, but solely whether we are called to remain in it, as we should not deliberate whether we were called to fly a house infected with plague or on fire.”

This chapter of the Evangelist, which I should like to read with you entire, concludes with an exhortation to watch and pray in order to shun all these misfortunes, and in truth, it is proper indeed that when the danger is continual the prayer should be continual also.

For this purpose I send the prayers which were asked of me; it is now three in the afternoon. Since your departure, a miracle has been performed upon a nun of Pontoise, who, without leaving her convent, has been cured of an extraordinary headache by an act of devotion to the holy Thorn. I will tell you more about it another time. But I must quote to you, in respect to this, an excellent saying of St. Augustine, very consoling to certain persons, that those alone really see miracles whom the miracles benefit; for they are not seen at all if they do not benefit.

I am under obligations that I cannot sufficiently express for the present which you have made me; I did not know what it could be, for I unfolded it before reading your letter, and I afterwards repented for not having rendered to it at first the respect that was due to it. It is a truth that the Holy Spirit reposes invisibly in the relics of those who have died in the grace of God, until they shall appear visibly in the resurrection, and this it is that renders the relics of the saints so worthy of veneration. For God never abandons his own, even in the sepulchre in which their bodies, though dead to the eyes of men, are more than ever living in the sight of God, since sin is no more in them; whilst it constantly resides in them during life, at least in its root, for the fruits of sin are not always in them; an this fatal root, which is inseparable from them in life, causes it to be forbidden us during life to honor them, since they are rather worthy of detestation. It is for this that death becomes necessary to mortify entirely this fatal root, and this it is that

renders it desirable. But it is of no use to tell you what you know so well; it would be better to tell it to the other persons of whom you speak, but they would not listen to it.

Letter from Pascal to Queen Christina, on Sending Her the Arithmetical Machine, 1650



MADAME,

If I had as much health as zeal, I should go myself to present to Your Majesty a work of several years which I dare offer you from so far; and I should not suffer any other hands than mine to have the honor of bearing it to the feet of the greatest princess in the world. This work, Madame, is a machine for making arithmetical calculations without pen or counters. Your Majesty is not ignorant of the cost of time and pains of new productions, above all when the inventors wish to bring them themselves to their highest perfection; this is why it would be useless to say how much I have laboured upon this one, and I cannot better express myself than by saying that I have devoted myself to it with as much ardor as though I had foreseen that it would one day appear before so august a person. But, Madame, if this honor has not been the veritable motive of my work, it will be at least its recompense; and I shall esteem myself too happy if, after so many vigils, it can give Your Majesty a few moments' satisfaction. I shall not importune Your Majesty with the details of the parts which compose this machine; if you have any curiosity in respect to it, you can satisfy yourself in a discourse which I have addressed to M. de Bourdelot; in which I have sketched in a few words the whole history of this work, the object of its invention, the occasion that led to its investigation, the utility of its applications, the difficulty of its execution, the degree of its progress, the success of its accomplishment, and the rules for its use. I shall therefore only speak here of the motive that led me to offer it to Your Majesty, which I consider as the consummation and happiest fortune of its destiny. I know, Madame, that I may be suspected of having sought honor in presenting it to Your Majesty, since it can pass only for something extraordinary

when it is seen that it is addressed to you: and that whilst it should only be offered to you through the consideration of its excellence, it will be judged that it is excellent for the sole reason that it is offered to you. It is not this hope, however, that has inspired me with such a design. It is too great, Madame, to have any other object than Your Majesty yourself. What has really determined me to this is the union that I find in your sacred person of two things that equally overwhelm me with admiration and respect — which are, sovereign authority and solid science; for I have an especial veneration for those who are elevated to the supreme degree either of power or of knowledge. The latter may, if I am not mistaken, as well as the former, pass for sovereigns. The same gradations are found in genius as in condition; and the power of kings over their subjects is, it seems to me, only an image of the power of minds over inferior minds, over whom they exercise the right of persuasion, which is with them what the right of command is in political government. This second empire even appears to me of an order so much the more elevated, as minds are of an order more elevated than bodies; and so much the more just, as it can be shared and preserved only by merit, whilst the other can be shared and preserved by birth and fortune. It must be acknowledged then that each of these empires is great in itself; but, Madame, let Your Majesty, who is not wounded by it, permit me to say, the one without the other appears to me defective. However powerful a monarch may be, something is wanting to his glory if he has not pre-eminence of mind; and however enlightened a subject may be, his condition is always lowered by dependence. Men who naturally desire what is most perfect, have hitherto continually aspired to meet this sovereign *par excellence.* All kings and scholars have hitherto been but faint outlines of it, only half performing their endeavor; this masterpiece has been reserved for our own times. And that this great marvel might appear accompanied with all possible subjects of wonder, the position that men could not attain is filled by a youthful queen, in whom are found combined the advantage of experience with the tenderness of youth, the leisure of study with the occupation of royal birth, and the eminence of science with the feebleness of sex. It is Your Majesty, Madame,

that furnishes to the world this unique example that was wanting to it. You it is in whom power ;s dispensed by the light of science, and science exalted by the lustre of authority. It is from this marvellous union that, as Your Majesty sees nothing beneath your power, you also see nothing above your mind, and that you will be the admiration of every age. Reign then, incomparable princess, in a manner wholly new; let your genius subdue every thin that is not submissive to your arms; reign by right of birth during a long course of years over so many triumphant provinces; but reign continually by the force of your merit over the whole extent of the earth. As for me, not having been born under the former of your empires, I wish all the world to know that I glory in living under the latter; and it is to bear witness to this that I dare to raise my eyes to my queen, in giving her this first proof of my dependence.

This, Madame, is what leads me to make to Your Majesty this present, although unworthy of you. My weakness has not checked my ambition. I have figured to myself that although the name alone of Your Majesty seems to put away from you every thing that is disproportioned to your greatness, you will not however reject every thing that is inferior to yourself; as your greatness would thus be without homage and your glory without praise. You will be contented to receive a great mental effort, without exacting that it should be the effort of a mind as great as your own. It is by this condescension that you will deign to enter into communication with the rest of mankind; and all these joint considerations make me protest, with all the submission of which one of the greatest admirers of your heroic qualities is capable, that I desire nothing with so much ardor as to be able to be adopted, Madame, by Your Majesty, as your most humble, most obedient, and most faithful servant.

BLAISE PASCAL.

Minor Works

Epitaph of M. Pascal, Pere



HERE LIES, ETC.

Illustrious for his great knowledge which was recognized by the scholars of all Europe; more illustrious still for the great probity which he exercised in the offices and employments with which he was honored; but much more illustrious for his exemplary piety. He tasted good and bad fortune, that he might be known in every thing for what he was. He was seen temperate in prosperity and patient in adversity. He sought the aid of God in misfortune, and rendered him thanks in happiness. His heart was devoted to his God, his king, his family, and his friends. He had respect for the great and love for the small; it pleased God to crown all the graces of nature that he had bestowed on him with a divine grace which made his great love for God the foundation, the stay, and the consummation of all his other virtues.

Thou, who seest in this epitome the only thing that remains to us of so beautiful a life, admire the fragility of all present things, weep the loss that we have suffered; render thanks to God for having left for a time to earth the enjoyment of such a treasure; and pray his goodness to crown with his eternal glory him whom he crowned here below with more graces and virtues than the limits of an epitaph permit us to relate.

His grief-stricken children have placed this epitaph on this spot, which they have composed from the fulness of their hearts, in order to render homage to the truth and not to appear ingrates in the sight of God.

Prayer, to Ask of God the Proper Use of Sickness



I. LORD, WHOSE spirit is so good and so gentle in all things, and who art so merciful that not only the prosperity but the very disgrace that happens to thy elect is the effect of thy mercy, grant me the favor not to act towards me as towards a heathen in the condition to which thy justice has reduced me: that like a true Christian I may recognize thee for my Father and my God, in whatever condition I may find myself, since the change of my condition brings none to thine; as thou art always the same, however subject I may be to change, and as thou art none the less God when thou afflictest and punishest, than when thou comfortest and showest indulgence.

II. Thou gavest me health to serve thee, and I made a profane use of it. Thou sendest me sickness now to correct me; suffer not that I use it to irritate thee by my impatience. I made a bad use of my health, and thou hast justly punished me for it. Suffer not that I make a bad use of my punishment. And since the corruption of my nature is such that it renders thy favors pernicious to me, grant, O my God! that thy all-powerful grace may render thy chastisements salutary. If my heart was full of affection for the world while it retained its vigor, destroy this vigor for my salvation; and render me incapable of enjoying the world, either through weakness of body or through zeal of charity, that I may enjoy but thee alone.

III. O God, before whom I must render an exact account of all my actions at the end of my life and at the end of the world! O God, who lettest the world and all the things of the world subsist but to train thy elect or to punish sinners! O God, who allowest sinners hardened in the pleasurable and criminal use of the world! O God, who makest our bodies to die, and who at the hour of death separatest our soul from all that it loved in the world! O God, who wilt snatch me,

at this last moment of my life, from all the things to which I am attached and on which I have set my heart! O God, who wilt consume at the last day the heavens and the earth with all the creatures they contain, to show to all mankind that nothing subsists save thee, and that thus nothing is worthy of love save thee, since nothing is durable save thee! O God, who wilt destroy all these vain idols and all these fatal objects of our passions! I praise thee, my God, and I will bless thee all the days of my life, that it has pleased thee to anticipate in my favor this terrible day, by destroying all things in respect to me through the weakness to which thou hast reduced me. I praise thee, my God, and I will bless thee all the days of my life, that it has pleased thee to reduce me to the incapacity of enjoying the sweets of health and the pleasures of the world, and that thou hast destroyed in some sort, for my advantage, the deceitful idols that thou wilt destroy effectively, for the confusion of the wicked, in the day of thy wrath. Grant, Lord, that I may judge myself, after the destruction that thou hast made with respect to me, that thou mayest not judge me thyself, after the entire destruction that thou wilt make of my life and of the world. For, Lord, as at the instant of my death I shall find myself separated from the world, stripped of all things, alone in thy presence, to answer to thy justice for all the emotions of my heart, grant that I may consider myself in this sickness as in a species of death, separated from the world, stripped of all the objects of my attachment, alone in thy presence, to implore of thy mercy the conversion of my heart; and that thus I may have extreme consolation in knowing that thou sendest me now a partial death in order to exercise thy mercy, before thou sendest me death effectively in order to exercise thy judgment. Grant then, O my God, that as thou hast anticipated my death, I may anticipate the rigor of thy sentence, and that I may examine myself before thy judgment, so that I may find mercy in thy presence.

IV. Grant, O my God! that I may adore in silence the order of thy adorable providence in the direction of my life; that this scourge may console me; and that, having lived during peace in the bitterness of my sins, I may taste the heavenly sweets of thy grace during the salutary evils with which thou afflictest me. But I

perceive, my God, that my heart is so obdurate and full of the thoughts, the cares, the anxieties, and the attachments of the world, that sickness no more than health, nor discourses, nor books, nor thy sacred Scriptures, nor thy Gospel, nor thy most holy mysteries, nor alms, nor fasts, nor mortifications, nor miracles, nor the use of sacraments, nor the sacrifice of thy body, nor all my efforts, nor those of all the world together, can do any thing at all for the commencement of my conversion, if thou dost not accompany all these things with an extraordinary assistance of thy grace. It is for this that I address myself to thee, all-powerful God, to ask of thee a gift which all created things together cannot accord to me. I should not have the boldness to address to thee my cries, if any other had power to grant them. But, my God, as the conversion of my heart, which I ask of thee, is a work which surpasses all the efforts of nature, I can only address myself to the all-powerful Author and Master of nature and of my heart. To whom shall I cry, O Lord, to whom shall I have recourse, if not to thee? Nothing that is less than God can fulfil my expectation. It is God himself that I ask and seek; and it is to thee alone, my God, that I address myself to obtain thee, Open my heart, O Lord; enter into the rebellious place which has been occupied by vices. They hold it subject. Enter into it as into the strong man's house; but first bind the strong and powerful enemy that has possession of it, and then take the treasures which are there. Lord, take my affections, which the world had stolen; take this treasure thyself, or rather retake it, since it belongs to thee as a tribute that I owe thee, since thy image is imprinted in it. Thou formedst it, O Lord, at the moment of my baptism, which was my second birth; but it is wholly effaced. The image of the world is so deeply engraven there that thine is no longer to be recognized. Thou alone couldst create my soul, thou alone canst create it anew; thou alone couldst form thy image, thou alone canst reform and reimprint thy effaced portrait, that is, my Saviour, Jesus Christ, who is thy image, and the expression of thy substance.

V. O my God! how happy is a heart that can love so charming an object, that does not dishonor it, and the attachment of which is so salutary to it! I feel that I cannot love the world without displeasing thee, and destroying and dishonoring

myself; yet the world is still the object of my delight. O my God! how happy is the soul of which thou art the delight, since it can abandon itself to loving thee, not only without scruple, but also with merit! How firm and durable is its happiness, since its expectation will never be frustrated, because thou wilt never be destroyed, and neither life nor death will ever separate it from the object of its desires; and since the same moment that will plunge the wicked with their idols into a common ruin, will unite the just with thee in a common glory; and since, as the former will perish with the perishable objects to which they are attached, the latter will subsist eternally in the eternal and self-subsistent object to which they are closely bound! Oh! how happy are those who with an entire liberty, and irresistible inclination of their will, love perfectly and freely that which they are obliged to love necessarily!

VI. Perfect, O my God, the good impulses that thou givest me. Be their end as thou art their principle. Crown thy own gifts, for I recognize that they are from thee. Yes, my God, and far from pretending that my prayers may have some merit that forces thee to accord them of necessity, I humbly acknowledge that, having given to created things my heart, which thou hadst formed only for thyself, and not for the world, nor for myself, I can expect no grace except from thy mercy, since I have nothing in me that can oblige thee to it, and since all the natural impulses of my heart, whether tending towards created things, or towards myself, can only irritate thee. I, therefore, render thee thanks, my God, for the good impulses which thou givest me, and for the very one that thou hast given me to render thanks for them.

VII. Move my heart to repent of my faults, since, without this internal sorrow, the external ills with which thou affectest my body will be to me a new occasion of sin. Make me truly to know that the ills of the body are nothing else than the punishment and the symbol combined of the ills of the soul. But, Lord, grant also that they may be their remedy, by making me consider, in the pains which I feel, those that I did not feel in my soul, although wholly diseased, and covered with sores. For, Lord, the greatest of its diseases is this insensibility and extreme

weakness, which had taken away from it all feeling of its own sufferings. Make me to feel them acutely, and grant that the portion of life that remains to me may be a continual penitence to wash away the offences that I have committed.

VIII. Lord, although my past life may have been exempt from great crimes, of which thou hast removed from me the occasions, it has nevertheless been most odious to thee by its continual negligence, by the bad use of thy most august sacraments, by the contempt of thy word and of thy inspirations, by the indolence and total uselessness of my actions and my thoughts, by the complete loss of the time which thou hadst given me only to adore thee, to seek in all my occupations the means of pleasing thee, and to repent of faults that are committed every day, and are even common to the most just; so that their life should be a continual penitence, without which they are in danger of falling from their justice. Thus, my God, I have always been opposed to thee.

IX. Yes, Lord, hitherto I have always been deaf to thy inspirations, I have despised thy oracles; I have judged the contrary of that which thou hast judged; I have contradicted the holy maxims which thou hast brought to the world from the bosom of thy eternal Father, and conformably to which thou wilt judge the world. Thou sayest: Blessed are those that mourn, and woe to those that are comforted! And I have said: Woe to those that mourn and blessed are those that are comforted! I have said: Blessed are those that enjoy an affluent fortune, a glorious reputation, and robust health! And why have I reputed them blessed, if not because all these advantages furnished them ample facility for enjoying created things, that is for offending thee! Yes, Lord, I confess that I have esteemed health a blessing, not because it is an easy means for serving thee with utility, for accomplishing more cares and vigils in thy service, and for the assistance of my neighbor; but because by its aid I could abandon myself with less restraint to the abundance of the delights of life, and better relish fatal pleasures. Grant me the favor, Lord, to reform my corrupt reason and to conform my sentiments to thine. Let me esteem myself happy in affliction, and, in the impotence of acting externally, purify my sentiments so that they may no longer be repugnant to thine;

and let me thus find thee with-in myself, since I cannot seek thee without because of my weakness. For, Lord, thy kingdom is within thy faithful; and I shall find it within myself, if I find there thy spirit and thy sentiments.

X. But, Lord, what shall I do to force thee to diffuse thy spirit over this miserable earth? All that I am is odious to thee, and I find nothing in myself that can be pleasing to thee. I see nothing therein, Lord, but my sufferings, which bear some resemblance to thine. Consider then the ills that I suffer and those that menace me. Look with an eye of mercy upon the wounds that thy hand has made, O my Saviour, who lovedst thy sufferings in death! O God, who wert made man only to suffer more than any other man for the salvation of mankind! O God, who wert not incarnated until after the sin of mankind, and who only tookest upon thyself a body in order to suffer therein all the ills which our sins had merited! O God, who lovedst so much these suffering bodies that thou hast chosen for thyself a body more oppressed with suffering than any that has ever appeared on earth! Look with favor upon my body, not for itself, nor for all that it contains, for everything therein deserving of thy anger, but for the ills that it endures, which alone can be worthy of thy love. Love my sufferings, Lord, and let my ills invite thee to visit me. But to finish the preparation for thy abode, grant, O my Saviour, that if my body has this in common with thine — that it suffers for my offences, my soul may also have this in common with thine — that it may be plunged in sorrow for the same offences; and that thus I may suffer with thee, and like thee, both in my body and in my soul, for the sins that I have committed.

XI. Grant me the favor, Lord, to join thy consolations to my sufferings, that I may suffer like a Christian. I ask not to be exempt from sorrow, for this is the recompense of the saints; but I ask that I may not be abandoned to the sorrows of nature without the consolations of thy spirit; for this is the curse of the Jews and the heathen. I ask not to have a fulness of consolation without any suffering; for this is the life of glory. Neither do I ask to be in the fulness of evils without consolation; for this is the state of Judaism. But I ask, Lord, to feel at the same time both the sorrows of nature for my sins, and the consolations of thy spirit

through thy grace; for this is the true condition of Christianity. Let me not feel sorrow without consolation; but let me feel sorrow and consolation together, that I may come at last to feel thy consolation without any sorrow. For, Lord, thou lettest the world languish in natural suffering without consolation, before the coming of thy only Son: now thou consolest and assuagest the sufferings of thy faithful through the grace of thy only Son: and thou crownest thy saints with a pure beatitude in the glory of thy only Son. Such are the admirable degrees through which thou conductest thy work. Thou hast drawn me from the first: make me pass through the second, to arrive at the third. Lord, this is the favor that I ask of thee.

XII. Suffer me not to be so far removed from thee, that I can consider thy soul sorrowful unto death, and thy body a prey to death for my own sins, without rejoicing to suffer both in my body and in my soul. For what is there more shameful, and yet more common in Christians and in myself, than that, whilst thou sweatest blood for the expiation of our offences, we live in delights; and that those Christians who profess to belong to thee, that those who by baptism have renounced the world to follow thee, that those who have sworn solemnly in the presence of the Church to live and die for thee, that those who profess to believe that the world has persecuted and crucified thee, that those who believe that thou wert exposed to the wrath of God and the cruelty of men to ransom them from their crimes; that those, I say, who believe all these truths, who consider thy body as the victim that was yielded up for their salvation, who consider the pleasures and the sins of the world as the only cause of thy sufferings, and the world itself as thy executioner, seek to flatter their bodies by these very pleasures, in this very world; and that those who cannot, without shuddering with horror, see a man caress and cherish the murderer of his father, who would devote himself to give him life, can live as I have done, with full joy, in the world that I know to have been veritably the murderer of him whom I acknowledge for my God and my Father, who has delivered himself up for my own salvation, and who has borne in his person the penalty of my iniquities? It is just, Lord, that thou shouldst have

interrupted a joy so criminal as that in which I was reposing in the shadow of death.

XIII. Remove from me then, Lord, the sadness that the love of self might give me for my own sufferings and for the things of the world that do not succeed to the satisfaction of the inclinations of my heart, and that do not regard thy glory; but create in me a sadness in conformity with thine. Let my sufferings serve to appease thy wrath. Make of them an occasion for my salvation and my conversion. Let me henceforth desire health and life only to employ them and end them for thee, with thee, and in thee. I ask of thee neither health, nor sickness, nor life, nor death; but that thou wilt dispose of my health and my sickness, my life and my death, for thy glory, for my salvation, and for the utility of the Church and of thy saints, of whom I hope by thy grace to form a part. Thou alone knowest what is most expedient for me: thou art the sovereign master, do what thou wilt. Give to me, take from me; but conform my will to thine; and grant that in humble and perfect submission and in holy confidence, I may be disposed to receive the orders of thy eternal providence, and that I may adore alike all that comes to me from thee.

XIV. Grant, my God, that in a constantly equal uniformity of spirit I may receive all kinds of events, since we know not what we should ask, and since I cannot desire one more than another without presumption, and without rendering myself the judge of and responsible for the results that thy wisdom has rightly been pleased to hide from me. Lord, I know only that I know but one thing, that it is good to follow thee and that it is evil to offend thee. After this, I know not which is the better or worse of any thing; I know not which is more profitable to me, health or sickness, wealth or poverty, nor of all the things of the world. This is a discernment that exceeds the power of men or of angels, and that is hidden in the secrets of thy providence which I adore, and which I wish not to fathom.

XV. Grant then, Lord, that such as I am I may conform myself to thy will; and that being sick as I am, I may glorify thee in my sufferings. Without them I could not arrive at glory; and thou, too, my Saviour, hast only wished to attain it through

them. It was by the tokens of thy sufferings that thou wert recognized by thy disciples; and it is by sufferings also that thou wilt recognize thy disciples. Acknowledge me then for thy disciple in the evils which I endure both in my body and my mind, for the offences that I have committed. And since nothing is pleasing to God if it be not offered through thee, unite my will to thine, and my sorrows to those which thou hast suffered. Grant that mine may become thine. Unite me to thee; fill me with thyself and with thy Holy Spirit. Enter into my heart and soul, to bear in them my sufferings, and to continue to endure in me what remains to thee to suffer of thy passion, that thou mayest complete in thy members even the perfect consummation of thy body, so that being full of thee, it may no longer be that I live and suffer, but that it may be thou that livest and sufferest in me, O my Saviour! And that thus having some small part in thy sufferings, thou wilt fill me entirely with the glory that they have acquired for thee, in which thou wilt live with the Father and the Holy Spirit through ages upon ages. So be it.

Comparison Between Christians of Early Times and Those of To-Day



IN EARLY TIMES, Christians were perfectly instructed in all the points necessary to salvation; whilst we see to-day so gross an ignorance of them, that it makes all those mourn who have sentiments of tenderness for the Church.

Men only entered then into the Church after great labors and long desires; they find their way into it now without any trouble, without care, and without labor.

They were only admitted to it after a strict examination. They are received into it now before they are in a condition to be examined.

They were not received then until after having abjured their past life, until after having renounced the world, the flesh, and the devil. They enter it now before they are in a condition to do any of these things.

In short, it was necessary formerly to forsake the world in order to be received into the Church; whilst men enter now into the Church at the same time as into the world. By this process, an essential distinction was then known between the world and the Church. They were considered as two opposites, as two irreconcilable enemies, of which the one persecuted the other without cessation, and of which the weaker in appearance should one day triumph over the stronger; so that of these two antagonistic parties men quitted the one to enter the other; they abandoned the maxims of the one to embrace the maxims of the other; they put off the sentiments of the one to put on the sentiments of the other; in fine, they quitted, they renounced, they abjured this world in which they had received their first birth, to devote themselves entirely to the Church in which they received as it were their second birth and thus they conceived a terrible difference between the two; whilst they now find themselves almost at the same time in both; and the same moment that brings us forth into the world makes us acknowledged by the

Church, so that the reason supervening, no longer makes a difference between these two opposite worlds. It is developed in both together. Men frequent the Sacraments, and enjoy the pleasures of the world; and thus whilst formerly they saw an essential difference between the two, they see them now confounded and blended together, so that they can no longer discriminate between them.

Hence it is that formerly none but well-instructed persons were to be seen among the Christians, whilst they are now in an ignorance that inspires one with horror; hence it is that those who had formerly been regenerated by baptism, and had forsaken the vices of the world to enter into the piety of the Church, fell back so rarely from the Church into the world; whilst nothing more common is to be seen at this time than the vices of the world in the hearts of Christians. The Church of the Saints is found defiled by the mingling of the wicked; and her children, whom she has conceived and nourished from childhood in her bosom, are the very ones who carry into her heart, that is to the participation in her most august mysteries, the most cruel of her enemies, the spirit of the world, the spirit of ambition, the spirit of vengeance, the spirit of impurity, the spirit of concupiscence and the love that she has for her children obliges her to admit into her very bowels the most cruel of her persecutors.

But it is not to the Church that should be imputed the misfortunes which have followed a change in such salutary discipline, for she has not changed in spirit, however she may have changed in conduct. Having therefore seen that the deferring of baptism left a great number of children in the curse of Adam, she wished to deliver them from this mass of perdition by hastening the aid which she could give them; and this good mother sees only with extreme regret that what she devised for the salvation of these children has become the occasion for the destruction of adults. Her true spirit is that those whom she withdraws at so tender an age from the contagion of the world, shall adopt sentiments wholly opposed to those of the world. She anticipates the use of reason to anticipate the vices into which corrupt reason will allure them; and before their mind has power to act, she fills them with her spirit, that they may live in ignorance of the world and in a

condition so much the more remote from vice as they will never have known it. This appears from the ceremonies of baptism; for she does not accord baptism to children until after they have declared, by the mouth of sponsors, that they desire it, that they believe, that they renounce the world and Satan. And as she wishes that they should preserve these intentions throughout the whole course of their lives, she commands them expressly to keep them inviolate, and orders the sponsors, by an indispensable commandment, to instruct the children in all these things; for she does not wish that those whom she has nourished in her bosom should to-day be less instructed and less zealous than the adults whom she admitted in former times to the number of her own; she does not desire a less perfection in those whom she nourishes than in those whom she receives…. Yet men use it in a manner so contrary to the intention of the Church, that one cannot think of it without horror. They scarcely reflect any longer upon so great a benefit, because they have never wished it, because they have never asked it, because they do not even remember having received it….

But as it is evident that the Church demands no less zeal in those who have been brought up servants of the faith than in those who aspire to become such, it is necessary to place before their eyes the example of the catechumens, to consider their ardor, their devotion, their horror of the world, their generous renunciation of the world; and if they were not deemed worthy of receiving baptism without this disposition, those who do not find it in themselves…. They must therefore submit to receive the instruction that they would have had if they had begun to enter into the communion of the Church; they must moreover submit to a continual penitence, and have less aversion for the austerity or their mortification than pleasure in the use of delights poisoned by sin….

To dispose them to be instructed, they must be made to understand the difference of the customs that have been practised in the Church in conformity with the diversity of the times…. As in the infant Church they taught the catechumens, that is those who aspired to baptism, before conferring it upon them; and only admitted them to it after full instruction in the mysteries of

religion, after a penitence for their past lives, after profound knowledge of the greatness and excellence of the profession of the faith and of the Christian maxims into which they desired to enter forever, after eminent tokens of a genuine conversion of the heart, and after an extreme desire of baptism. These things being known to all the Church, the sacrament of incorporation was conferred upon them by which they became members of the Church; whilst in these times, baptism having been accorded to children before the use of reason, through very important considerations, it happens that the negligence of parents suffers Christians to grow old without any knowledge of the greatness of our religion.

When instruction preceded baptism, all were instructed; but now that baptism precedes instruction, the instruction that was necessary has become voluntary, and then neglected and almost abolished. The true reason of this conduct is that men are persuaded of the necessity of baptism, and they are not persuaded of the necessity of instruction. So that when instruction preceded baptism, the necessity of the one caused men to have recourse to the other necessarily; whilst baptism at the present time preceding instruction, as men have been made Christians without having been instructed, they believe that they can remain Christians without seeking instruction…. And whilst the early Christians testified so much gratitude towards the Church for the favor which she accorded only to their long prayers, they testify to-day so much ingratitude for this same favor, which she accords to them even before they are in a condition to ask it. And if she detested so strongly the lapses of the former, although so rare, how much must she hold in abomination the continual lapses and relapses of the latter, although they are much more indebted to her, since she has drawn them much sooner and much more unsparingly from the damnation to which they were bound by their first birth. She cannot, without mourning, see the greatest of her favors abused, and what she has done to secure their salvation becomes the almost certain occasion of their destruction….

Discourses on the Condition of the Great

I



IN ORDER TO enter into a real knowledge of your condition, consider it in this image:

A man was cast by a tempest upon an unknown island, the inhabitants of which were in trouble to find their king, who was lost; and having a strong resemblance both in form and face to this king, he was taken for him, and acknowledged in this capacity by all the people. At first he knew not what course to take; but finally he resolved to give himself up to his good fortune. He received all the homage that they chose to render him, and suffered himself to be treated as a king.

But as he could not forget his real condition, he was conscious, at the same time that he was receiving this homage, that he was not the king whom this people had sought, and that this kingdom did not belong to him. Thus he had a double thought: the one by which he acted as king, the other by which he recognized his true state, and that it was accident alone that had placed him in his present condition. He concealed the latter thought, and revealed the other. It was by the former that he treated with the people, and by the latter that he treated with himself.

Do not imagine that it is less an accident by which you find yourself master of the wealth which you possess, than that by which this man found himself king. You have no right to it of yourself and by your own nature any more than he: and not only do you find yourself the son of a duke, but also do you find yourself in the world at all, only through an infinity of chances. Your birth depends on a marriage, or rather on the marriages of all those from whom you descend. But

upon what do these marriages depend? A visit made by chance, and idle word, a thousand unforeseen occasions.

You hold, you say, your wealth from your ancestors; but was it not by a thousand accidents that your ancestors acquired it and that they preserved it? A thousand others, as capable as they, have either been unable to acquire it, or have lost if after having gained it. Do you imagine, too, that it may have been by some natural way that this wealth has passed from your ancestors to you? This is not true. This order is founded only upon the mere will of legislators who may have had good reasons, but none of which was drawn from a natural right that you have over these things. If it had pleased them to order that this wealth, after having been possessed by fathers during their life, should return to the republic after their death, you would have no reason to complain of it.

Thus the whole title by which you possess your property, is not a title of nature but of a human institution. Another turn of imagination in those who made the laws would have rendered you poor; and it is only this concurrence of chance which caused your birth with the caprice of laws favorable in your behalf, that puts you in possession of all this property.

I will not say that it does not legitimately belong to you, and that it is permissible for another to wrest it from you; for God, who is its master, has permitted communities to make laws for its division, and when these laws are once established, it is unjust to violate them. This it is that distinguishes you somewhat from the man who possessed his kingdom only through the error of the people; because God did not authorize this possession, and required him to renounce it, whilst he authorizes yours. But what you have wholly in common with him is, that this right which you have, is not founded any more than his upon any quality or any merit in yourself which renders you worthy of it. Your soul and your body are, of themselves, indifferent to the state of boatman or that of duke; and there is no natural bond that attaches them to one condition rather than to another.

What follows from this? that you should have a double thought, like the man of whom we have spoken, and that, if you act externally with men in conformity with your rank, you should recognize, by a more secret but truer thought, that you have nothing naturally superior to them. If the public thought elevates you above the generality of men, let the other humble you, and hold you in a perfect equality with all mankind, for this is your natural condition.

The populace that admires you knows not, perhaps, this secret. It believes that nobility is real greatness, and it almost considers the great as being of a different nature from others. Do not discover to them this error, unless you choose; but do not abuse this elevation with insolence, and, above all, do not mistake yourself by believing that your being has something in it more exalted than that of others.

What would you say of that man who was made king by the error of the people, if he had so far forgotten his natural condition as to imagine that this kingdom was due to him, that he deserved it, and that it belonged to him of right? You would marvel at his stupidity and folly. But is there less in the people of rank who live in so strange a forgetfulness of their natural condition?

How important is this advice! For all the excesses, all the violence, and all the vanity of great men, come from the fact that they know not what they are: it being difficult for those who regard themselves at heart as equal with all men, and who are fully persuaded that they have nothing within themselves that merits these trifling advantages which God has given them over others, to treat them with insolence. For this it is necessary for one to forget himself, and to believe that he has some real excellence above them, in which consists this illusion that I am endeavoring to discover to you.

II

IT is well, sir, that you should know what is due to you, that you may not pretend to exact from men that which is not due to you; for this is an obvious injustice;

and nevertheless it is very common to those of your condition, because they are ignorant of the nature of it.

There is in the world two kinds of greatness: for there is greatness of institution, and natural greatness. Greatness of institution depends upon the will of men who have with reason thought it right to honor certain positions, and to attach to them certain marks of respect. Dignities and nobility are of this class. In one country the nobles are honored, in another the plebeians: in this the eldest, in the other the youngest. Why is this? because thus it has been pleasing to men. The thing was indifferent before the institution; since the institution it becomes just, because it is unjust to disturb it.

Natural greatness is that which is independent of the caprice of men, because it consists in the real and effective qualities of the soul or the body, which render the one or the other more estimable, as the sciences, the enlightenment of the mind, virtue, health, strength.

We owe something to both these kinds of greatness; but as they are of a different nature, we owe them likewise different respect. To the greatness of institution we owe the respect of institution, that is, certain external ceremonies which should be nevertheless accompanied, in conformity with reason, with an internal recognition of the justice of this order, but which do not make us conceive any real quality in those whom we honor after this manner. It is necessary to speak to kings on the bended knee, to remain standing in the presence-chamber of princes. It is a folly and baseness of spirit to refuse to them these duties.

But as for the natural homage which consists in esteem, we owe it only to natural greatness; and we owe, on the contrary, contempt and aversion to qualities contrary to this natural greatness. It is not necessary, because you are a duke, that I should esteem you; but it is necessary that I should salute you. If you are a duke and a gentleman, I shall render what I owe to both these qualities. I shall not refuse you the ceremonies that are merited by your quality of duke, nor the esteem that is merited by that of a gentleman. But if you were a duke without being a

gentleman, I should still do you justice; for in rendering you the external homage which the order of men has attached to you birth, I should not fail to have for you the internal contempt that would be merited by your baseness of mind.

Therein consists the justice of these duties. And the injustice consists in attaching natural respect to greatness of condition, or in exacting respect of condition for natural greatness. M. N. … is a greater geometrician than I; in this quality, he wishes to take precedence of me: I will tell him that he understands nothing of the matter. Geometry is a natural greatness; it demands a preference of esteem; but men have not attached to it any external preference. I shall, therefore, take precedence of him, and shall esteem him greater than I in the quality of geometrician. In the same manner, if, being duke and peer, you would not be contented with my standing uncovered before you, but should also wish that I should esteem you, I should ask you to show me the qualities that merit my esteem. If you did this, you would gain it, and I could not refuse it to you with justice; but if you did not do it, you would be unjust to demand it of me; and assuredly you would not succeed, were you the greatest prince in the world.

III

I WISH, sir, to make known to you your true condition; for this is the thing of all others of which persons of your class are the most ignorant. What is it, in your opinion, to be a great nobleman? It is to be master of several objects that men covet, and thus to be able to satisfy the wants and the desires of many. It is these wants and these desires that attract them towards you, and that make them submit to you: were it not for these, they would not even look at you; but they hope, by these services, and this deference which they render you, to obtain from you some part of the good which they desire, and of which they see that you have the disposal.

God is surrounded with people full of love who demand of him the benefits of love which are in his power: thus he is properly the king of love. You are in the

same manner surrounded with a small circle of persons, over whom you reign in your way. These men are full of desire. They demand of you the benefits of desire; it is desire that binds them to you. You are therefore properly the king of desire. Your kingdom is of small extent; but you are equal in this to the greatest kings of the earth: they are like you the sovereigns of desire. It is desire that constitutes their power; that is the possession of things that men covet.

But while knowing your natural condition, avail yourself of the means that it gives you, and do not pretend to rule by a different power than by that which makes you king. It is not your strength and your natural power that subjects all these people to you. Do not pretend then to rule them by force or to treat them with harshness. Satisfy their reasonable desires; alleviate their necessities; let your pleasure consist in being beneficent; advance them as much as you can, and you will act like the true king of desire.

What I tell you does not go very far; and if you stop there you will not save yourself from being lost; but at least you will be lost like an honest man. There are some men who expose themselves to damnation so foolishly by avarice, by brutality, by debauches, by violence, by excesses, by blasphemies! The way which I open to you is doubtless the most honorable; but in truth it is always a great folly for a man to expose himself to damnation; and therefore he must not stop at this. He must despise desire and its kingdom, and aspire to that kingdom of love in which all the subjects breathe nothing but love, and desire nothing but the benefits of love. Others than I will show you the way to this; it is sufficient for me to have turned you from those gross ways into which I see many persons of your condition suffer themselves to be led, for want of knowing the true state of this condition.

On the Conversion of the Sinner



THE FIRST THING with which God inspires the soul that he deigns to touch truly, is a knowledge and most extraordinary insight by which the soul considers things and herself in a manner wholly new.

This new light gives her fear, and brings her a trouble that penetrates the repose which she found in the things that made her delights.

She can no longer relish with tranquillity the things that charmed her. A continual scruple opposes her in this enjoyment, and this internal sight causes her to find no longer this accustomed sweetness among the things to which she abandoned herself with a full effusion of heart.

But she finds still more bitterness in the exercises of piety than in the vanities of the world. On one side, the vanity of the visible objects interests her more than the hope of the invisible, and on the other the solidity of the invisible interests her more than the vanity of the visible. And thus the presence of the one and the solidity of the other dispute her affection and the vanity of the one and the absence of the other excite her aversion; so that a disorder and confusion spring up in her, that…. She considers perishable things as perishable and even already perished; and in the certain prospect of the annihilation of every thing that she loves, she is terrified by this consideration, in seeing that each moment snatches from her the enjoyment of her good, and that what is most dear to her glides away at every moment, and that finally a certain day will come in which she will find herself stripped of all the things in which she had placed her hope. So that she comprehends perfectly that her heart being attached only to vain and fragile things, her soul must be left alone and forsaken on quitting this life, since she has not taken care to unite herself to a true and self-subsisting good which could sustain her both during and after this life.

Thence it comes that she begins to consider as nothingness all that must return to nothingness, — the heavens, the earth, her spirit, her body, her relatives, her friends, her enemies, wealth, poverty, disgrace, prosperity, honor, ignominy, esteem, contempt, authority, indigence, health, sickness, life itself. In fine, all that is less durable than her soul is incapable of satisfying the desire of this soul, which seeks earnestly to establish itself in a felicity as durable as herself.

She begins to be astonished at the blindness in which she has lived, and when she considers, on the one hand, the long time that she has lived without making these reflections, and the great number of people who live in the same way, and, on the other hand, how certain it is that the soul, being immortal as she is, cannot find her felicity among perishable things which will be taken away from her, at all events, by death, she enters into a holy confusion and an astonishment that brings to her a most salutary trouble.

For she considers that, however great may be the number of those who grow old in the maxims of the world, and whatever may be the authority of this multitude of examples of those who place their felicity in this world, it is nevertheless certain that, even though the things of the world should have some solid pleasure, which is recognized as false by an infinite number of fearful and continual examples, it is inevitable that we shall lose these things, or that death at last will deprive us of them; so that the soul having amassed treasures of temporal goods, of whatever nature they may be, whether gold, or science, or reputation, it is an indispensable necessity that she shall find herself stripped of all these objects of her felicity; and that thus, if they have had wherewith to satisfy her, they will not always have wherewith to satisfy her; and that, if it is to procure herself a real happiness, it is not to promise herself a very durable happiness, since it must be limited to the course of this life.

So that, by a holy humility which God exalts above pride, she begins to exalt herself above the generality of man-kind: she condemns their conduct, she detests their maxims, she bewails their blindness; she devotes herself to the search for the true good; she comprehends that it is necessary that it should have the two

following qualities: the one that it shall last as long as herself, and that it cannot be taken away from her except by her consent, and the other that there shall be nothing more lovely.

She sees that in the love she has had for the world, she found in it this second quality in her blindness; for she perceived nothing more lovely. But as she does not see the first in it, she knows that it is not the sovereign good. She seeks it, therefore, elsewhere, and knowing by a pure light that it is not in the things that are within her, or without her, or before her (in nothing, therefore, within or around her), she begins to seek it above her.

This elevation is so eminent and so transcendent that she does not stop at the heavens, — they have not wherewith to satisfy her, — nor above the heavens, nor at the angels, nor at the most perfect beings. She passes through all created things, and cannot stop her heart until she has rendered herself up at the throne of God, in which she begins to find her repose and that good which is such that there is nothing more lovely, and which cannot be taken away from her except by her own consent.

For although she does not feel those charms with which God recompenses continuance in piety, she comprehends, nevertheless, that created things cannot be more lovely than their Creator; and her reason, aided by the light of grace, makes her understand that there is nothing more lovely than God, and that he can only be taken away from those who reject him, since to possess him is only to desire him, and to refuse him is to lose him.

Thus she rejoices at having found a good which cannot be wrested from her so long as she shall desire it, and which has nothing above it.

And in these new reflections she enters into sight of the grandeur of her Creator, and into humiliations and profound adorations. She becomes, in consequence, reduced to nothing and being unable to form a base enough idea of herself, or to conceive an exalted enough idea of this sovereign good, she makes new efforts to abase herself to the lowest abysses of nothingness, in considering God in the immensities which she multiplies without ceasing. In fine, in this

conception, which exhausts her strength, she adores him in silence, she considers herself as his vile and useless creature, and by her reiterated homage adores and blesses him, and wishes to bless and to adore him forever. Then she acknowledges the grace which he has granted her in manifesting his infinite majesty to so vile a worm; and after a firm resolution to be eternally grateful for it, she becomes confused for having preferred so many vanities to this divine master; and in a spirit of compunction and penitence she has recourse to his pity to arrest his anger, the effect of which appears terrible to her. In the sight of these immensities….

She makes ardent prayers to God to obtain of his mercy that, as it has pleased him to discover himself to her, it may please him to conduct her to him, and to show her the means of arriving there. For as it is to God that she aspires she, aspires also only to reach him by means that come from God himself, because she wishes that he himself should be her path, her object, and her final end. After these prayers, she begins to act, and seeks among these….

She begins to know God, and to desire to reach him; but as she is ignorant of the means of attaining this, if her desire is sincere and true, she does the same as a person who, desiring to reach some place, having lost his way, and knowing his aberration, would have recourse to those who knew this way perfectly, and….

She resolves to conform to his will during the remainder of her life; but as her natural weakness, with the habit that she has of the sins in which she has lived, have reduced her to the impotence of attaining this felicity, she implores of his mercy the means of reaching him, of attaching herself to him, of adhering to him eternally…. Thus she perceives that she should adore God as a creature, render thanks to him as a debtor, satisfy him as a criminal, and pray to him as one poor and needy.

Conversation of Pascal with M. de Saci on Epictetus and Montaigne



"M. PASCAL CAME, too, at this time, to live at Port-Royal des Champs. I do not stop to tell who this man was, whom not only all France, but all Europe admired; his mind always acute, always active, was of an extent, an elevation, a firmness, a penetration, and a clearness exceeding any thing that can be believed…. This admirable man, being finally moved by God, submitted this lofty mind to the yoke of Jesus Christ, and this great and noble heart embraced penitence with humility. He came to Paris to throw himself into the arms of M. Singlin, resolved to do all that he should order him. M. Singlin thought, on seeing this great genius, that he should do well to send him to Port-Royal des Champs, where M. Arnauld would cope with him in the sciences, and where M. de Saci would teach him to despise them. He came therefore to live at Port-Royal. M. de Saci could not courteously avoid seeing him, especially having been urged to it by M. Singlin; but the holy enlightenment which he found in the Scripture and in the Fathers made him hope that he would not be dazzled by all the brilliancy of M. Pascal, which nevertheless charmed and carried away all the world. He found in fact all that he said very just. He acknowledged with pleasure the strength of his mind and conversation. All that M. Pascal said to him that was remarkable he had seen before in St. Augustine, and doing justice to every one, he said: 'M. Pascal is extremely estimable in that, not having read the Fathers of the Church, he has of himself, by the penetration of his mind, found the same truths that they had found. He finds them surprising, he says, because he has not found them in any place; but for us, we are accustomed to see them on every side in our books.' Thus, this wise ecclesiastic, finding that the ancients had not less light than the moderns,

held to them, and esteemed M. Pascal greatly because he agreed in all things with St. Augustine.

“The usual way of M. de Saci, in conversing with people, was to adapt his conversation to those with whom he was talking. If he met, for example, M. Champagne, he talked with him of painting. If he met M. Hamon, he talked with him of medicine. If he met the surgeon of the place, he questioned him on surgery. Those who cultivated the vine, or trees, or grain, told him all that was remarkable about them. Every thing served to lead him speedily to God and to lead others there with him. He thought it his duty therefore to put M. Pascal in his province, and to talk with him of the philosophical readings with which he had been most occupied. He led him to this subject in the first conversations that they had together. M. Pascal told him that his two most familiar books had been Epictetus and Montaigne, and highly eulogized these two finds. M. de Saci, who had always thought it a duty to read but little of these two authors, entreated M. Pascal to speak of them to him at length.”

“Epictetus,” says he, “is among the philosophers of the world who have best understood the duties of man. He requires, before all things, that he should regard God as his principal object; that he should be persuaded that he governs every thing with justice; that he should submit to him cheerfully, and that he should follow him voluntarily in every thing, as doing nothing except with the utmost wisdom: as thus this disposition will check all complaints and murmurs, and will prepare his mind to suffer tranquilly the most vexatious events. Never say, says he, I have lost this; say rather, I have restored it. my son is dead, I have restored him. My wife is dead, I have restored her. So with property and with every thing else. But he who has deprived me of it is a wicked man, you say. Why does it trouble you by whom the one who has lent it to you demands it of you again? While he permits you the use of it, take care of it as property belonging to another, as a man who is travelling would do in an inn. You ought not, says he, to desire that things should be done as you wish, but you ought to wish that they should be done as they are done. Remember, says he elsewhere, that you are here

as an actor, and that you play the part in a drama that it pleases the manager to give you. If he gives you a short one, play a short one; if he gives you a long one, play a long one; if he wishes you to feign the beggar, you should do it with all the simplicity possible to you; and so with the rest. It is your business to play well the part that is given you; but to choose it is the business of another. Have every day before your eyes death and the evils which seem the most intolerable; and you will never think of any thing lower and will desire nothing with excess.

"He shows, too, in a thousand ways what man should do. He requires that he should be humble, that he should conceal his good resolutions, especially in the beginning, and that he should accomplish them in secret: nothing destroys them more than to reveal them. He never tires of repeating that the whole study and desire of man should be to perceive the will of God and to pursue it.

"Such sir," said M. Pascal to M. de Saci, "was the enlightenment of this great mind that so well understood the duties of man. I dare say that he would have merited to be adored if he had also known his impotence as well, since it is necessary to be a god to teach both to men. Thus as he was clay and ashes, after having so well comprehended what was due, behold how he destroys himself in the presumption of what can be done. He says that God has given to every man the means of acquitting himself of all his obligations; that these means are always in our power; that we must seek felicity through the things that are in our power, since God has given them to us for this end: we must see what there is in us that is free; that wealth, life, esteem, are not in our power, and therefore do not lead to God; but that the mind cannot be forced to believe what it knows to be false, nor the will to love what it knows will render it unhappy; that these two powers are therefore free, and that it is through them that we can render ourselves perfect; that man can by these powers perfectly know God, love him, obey him, please him, cure himself of all his vices, acquire all the virtues, render himself holy, and thus the companion of God. These principles of a diabolic pride lead him to other errors, as that the soul is a portion of the divine substance; that sorrow and death

are not evils; that one may kill himself when he is persecuted to such a degree that he has reason to believe that God calls him, and others.

"As for Montaigne, of whom you wish too, sir, that I should speak to you, being born in a Christian State, he made profession of the Catholic religion, and in this there was nothing peculiar. But as he wished to discover what morals reason would dictate without the light of faith, he based his principles upon this supposition; and thus, considering man as destitute of all revelation, he discourses in this wise. He puts all things in a universal doubt, so general that this doubt bears away itself, that is whether he doubts, and even doubting this latter proposition, his uncertainty revolves upon itself in a perpetual and restless circle, alike opposed to those who affirm that every thing is uncertain and to those who affirm that every thing is not so, because he will affirm nothing. It is in this doubt which doubts itself, and in this ignorance which is ignorant of itself, and which he calls his master-form, that lies the essence of his opinion, which he was unable to express by any positive term. For if he says that he doubts, he betrays himself in affirming at least that he doubts; which being formally against his intention, he could only explain it by interrogation; so that, not wishing to say: "I do not know," he says: "What do I know?" Of this he makes his device, placing it under the scales which, weighing contradictories, are found in perfect equilibrium: that is, it is pure Pyrrhonism. Upon this principle revolve all his discourses and all his essays; and it is the only thing that he pretends really to establish, although he does not always point out his intention. He destroys in them insensibly all that passes for the most certain among men, not indeed to establish the contrary with a certainty to which alone he is the enemy, but merely to show that, appearances being equal on both sides, one knows not where to fix his belief.

"In this spirit he jests at all affirmations; for example, he combats those who have thought to establish in France a great remedy against lawsuits by the multitude and the pretended justice of the laws: as if one could cut off the root of the doubts whence arise these lawsuits, and as if there were dikes that could arrest the torrent of uncertainty and take conjectures captive! Thus it is that, when he

says that he would as soon submit his cause to the first passer-by as to judges armed with such a number of ordinances, he does not pretend that we should change the order of the State, — he has not so much ambition; nor that his advice may be better, — he believes none good. It is only to prove the vanity of the most received opinions; showing that the exclusion of all laws would rather diminish the number of disputants whilst the multiplicity of laws serves only to increase them, since difficulties grow in proportion as they are weighed; since obscurities are multiplied by commentaries; and since the surest way to understand the meaning of a discourse is not to examine it, and to take it on the first appearance: as soon as it is scrutinized, all its clearness becomes dissipated. In the like manner he judges by chance of all the acts of men and the points of history, sometimes in one way, sometimes in another, freely following his first impression, and, without constraining his thought by the rules of reason, which has only false measures, he delights to show, by his example, the contrarieties of the same mind. In this free genius, it is alike equal to him to get the better or not in the dispute, having always, by either example, a means of showing the weakness of opinions; being sustained with so much advantage in this universal doubt, that he is strengthened in it alike by his triumph and his defeat.

"It is from this position, floating and wavering as it is, that he combats with an invincible firmness the heretics of his times in respect to their affirmation of alone knowing the true sense of the Scripture; and it is also from this that he thunders forth most vigorously against the horrible impiety of those who dare to affirm that God is not. He attacks them especially in the apology of Raimond de Sebonde; and finding them voluntarily destitute of all revelation, and abandoned to their natural intelligence, all faith set aside, he demands of them upon what authority they undertake to judge of this sovereign Being who is infinite by his own definition, they who know truly none of the things of nature! He asks them upon what principles they rest; he presses them to show them. He examines all that they can produce, and penetrates them so deeply, by the talent in which he excels, that he demonstrates the vanity of all those that pass for the firmest and the most

natural. He asks whether the soul knows any thing; whether she knows herself; whether she is substance or accident, body or spirit, what is each of these things, and whether there is any thing that does not belong to one of these orders; whether she knows her own body, what is matter and whether she can discern among the innumerable variety of bodies from which it is produced; how she can reason if she is material; and how she can be united to a particular body and feel its passions if she is spiritual; when she commenced to be; with the body or before; and whether she will end with it or not; whether she is never mistaken; whether she knows when she errs, seeing that the essence of contempt consists in not knowing it; whether in her obscurity she does not believe as firmly that two and three make six as she knows afterwards that they make five; whether animals reason, think, talk; and who can determine what is time, what is space or extent, what is motion, what is unity, what are all the things that surround us and are wholly inexplicable to us; what is health, sickness, life, death, good, evil, justice, sin, of which we constantly speak; whether we have within us the principles of truth, and whether those which we believe, and which are called axioms or common notions, because they are common to all men, are in conformity with the essential truth. And since we know but by faith alone that an all-good Being has given them to us truly in creating us to know the truth, who can know without this light whether, being formed by chance, they are not uncertain, or whether, being formed by a lying and malicious being, he has not given them to us falsely in order to lead us astray? Showing by this that God and truth are inseparable, and that if the one is or is not, if it is certain or uncertain, the other is necessarily the same. Who knows then whether the common-sense, that we take for the judge of truth, can be the judge of that which has created it? Besides, who knows what truth is, and how can we be sure of having it without understanding it? Who knows even what is being which it is impossible to define, since there is nothing more general, and since it would be necessary at first, to explain it, to use the word itself: It is being…? And since we know not what is soul, body, time, space, motion, truth, good, nor even being, nor how to explain the idea that we form

within ourselves, how can we assure ourselves that it is the same in all men, seeing that we have not other token than the uniformity of consequences, which is not always a sign of that of principles; for they may indeed be very different, and lead nevertheless to the same conclusions, every one knowing that the true is often inferred from the false.

"Lastly, he examines thus profoundly the sciences, both geometry, of which he shows the uncertainty in the axioms and the terms that she does not define, as centre, motion, etc., physics in many more ways, and medicine in an infinity of methods; history, politics, ethics, jurisprudence, and the rest. So that we remain convinced that we think no better at present that in a dream from which we shall wake only at death, and during which we have the principles of truth as little as during natural sleep. It is thus that he reproaches reason divested of faith so strongly and so cruelly that, making her doubt whether she is rational, and whether animals are so or not, or in a greater or less degree, he makes her descend from the excellence which she has attributed to herself, and places her through grace on a level with the brutes, without permitting her to quit this order until she shall have been instructed by her Creator himself in respect to her rank, of which she is ignorant; threatening, if she grumbles, to place her beneath every thing, which is as easy as the opposite, and nevertheless giving her power to act only in order to remark her weakness with sincere humility, instead of exalting herself by a foolish insolence."

"M. de Saci, fancying himself living in a new country, and listening to a new language, repeated to himself the words of St. Augustine: O God of truth! are those who know these subtleties of reasoning therefore more pleasing to thee? He pitied this philosopher who pricked and tore himself on every side with the thorns that he formed, as St. Augustine said of himself when he was in this state. After some meditation, he said to M. Pascal:

"I thank you, sir; I am sure that if I had read Montaigne a long time, I should not know him so well as I do, since the conversation that I have just had with you. This man should wish that he might never be known, except by the recitals that

you make of his writings; and he might say with St. Augustine: *Ibi me vide, attende.* I believe assuredly that this man had talent; but I know not whether you do not lend to him a little more than he had, by the logical chain that you make of his principles. You can judge that having passed my life as I have done, I have had little counsel to read this author, the works of whom had nothing of that which we ought chiefly to seek in our reading, according to the rule of St. Augustine, because his works do not appear to proceed from a solid basis of humility and piety. We should forgive those philosophers of former times who styled themselves academicians, for putting every thing in doubt. But what need had Montaigne to divert the mind by reviving a doctrine which passes now in the eyes of Christians for the folly? This is the judgement that St. Augustine passes on these persons. For we can say after him of Montaigne: He sets faith aside in every thing that he says; therefore we, who have faith, should set aside every thing that he says. I do not blame the talent of this author, which was a great gift from God; but he might have used it better, and made a sacrifice of it to God rather than to the devil. What avails a blessing when one uses it so ill? *Quid proderat,* etc., said this holy doctor of him before his conversion. You are fortunate, sir, in having raised yourself above these people, who are called doctors, who are plunged in drunkenness, but whose hearts are void of truth. God has poured out into your heart other sweets and other attractions than those which you find in Montaigne. He has recalled you from that dangerous pleasure, *a jucunditate pestifera,* says St. Augustine, who renders thanks to God that he has forgiven him the sins which he had committed in delight-ing too much in vanity. St. Augustine is so much the more credible in this that he held formerly the same sentiments; and as you say of Montaigne that it is through universal doubt that he combats the heretics of his times, so through this same doubt of the academicians, St. Augustine forsook the heresy of the Manicheans. As soon as he belonged to God, he renounced these vanities, which he calls sacrileges. He perceived with what wisdom St. Paul warned us not to suffer ourselves to be seduced by these discourses. For he acknowledges that there is in them a certain harmony which fascinates: we

sometimes believe things true only because they are narrated eloquently. Those are dangerous viands, says he, that are served up in fine dishes; but these viands, instead of nourishing the heart, starve it. We then resemble men who sleep, and who fancy that they eat while sleeping: these imaginary viands leave them as empty as they were before.

“M. de Saci made several similar remarks to M. Pascal: whereupon M. Pascal said to him, that if he complimented him on thoroughly possessing Montaigne, and of knowing how to construe him well, he could tell him without flattery that he understood St. Augustine much better, and that he knew how to construe him much better, though little to the advantage of poor Montaigne. He expressed himself as being extremely edified by the solidity of all that he had just represented to him; nevertheless, being full of his author, he could not contain himself, and thus continued:

“I acknowledge, sir, that I cannot see without joy in this author proud reason so irresistibly baffled by its own weapons, and that fierce contention of man with man, which, from the companionship with God, to which he had exalted himself by maxims, hurls him down to the nature of brutes; and I should have loved with all my heart the minister of so great a vengeance, if, being a disciple of the Church by faith, he had followed the rules of ethics, in bringing men whom he had so usefully humiliated, not to irritate by new crimes him who alone can draw them from the crimes which he has convicted them of not being able even to know.

“But he acts on the contrary like a heathen in this wise. On this principle, says, he, outside of faith every thing is in uncertainty, and considering how much men seek the true and the good without making any progress towards tranquillity, he concludes that one should leave the care of them to others; and remain nevertheless in repose, skimming lightly over subjects for fear of going beyond one’s depth in them; and take the true and the good on first appearances, without dwelling on them, for they are so far from being solid that if one grasps them ever so lightly, they will slip through his fingers and leave them empty. For this reason

he follows the evidence of the senses and common-sense, because he would be obliged to do violence to himself to contradict them, and because he knows not whether he would gain by it, ignorant as to where the truth is. So he shuns pain and death, because his instinct impels him to it, and because he will not resist for the same reason, but without concluding thence that these may be the real evils, not confiding too much in these natural emotions of fear, seeing that we feel others of pleasure which are accused of being wrong, although nature speaks to the contrary. Thus there is nothing extravagant in his conduct; he acts like the rest of mankind, and all that they do in the foolish idea that they are pursuing the true good, he does from another principle, which is that probabilities being equal on either side, example and convenience are the counterpoises that decide him.

"He mounts his horse like a man that is not a philosopher, because he suffers it, but without believing that this is his right, not knowing whether this animal has not, on the contrary, the right to make use of him. He also does some violence to himself to avoid certain vices; and he even preserves fidelity to marriage on account of the penalty that follows irregularities; but if the trouble that he takes exceeds that which he avoids, it does not disturb him, the rule of this action being convenience and tranquillity. He utterly rejects therefore that stoical virtue which is depicted with a severe mien, fierce glance, bristling locks, and wrinkled and moist brow, in a painful and distorted posture, far from men in a gloomy silence, alone upon the summit of a rock: a phantom, he says, fit to frighten children, and which does nothing else with continual effort than to seek the repose which it never attains. His own is simple, familiar, pleasant, playful, and as we may say sportive: she follows whatever charms her, and toys negligently with good and bad accidents, reclining effeminately in the bosom of a tranquil indolence, from which she shows to those who seek felicity with so much toil that it is only there where she is reposing, and that ignorance and incuriosity are soft pillows for a well-balanced head, as he himself has said.

"I cannot conceal from you, sir, that in reading this author and comparing him with Epictetus, I have found that they are assuredly the two greatest defenders of

the two most celebrated sects of the world, and the only ones conformable to reason, since we can only follow one of these two roads, namely: either that there is a God, and then we place in him the sovereign good; or that he is uncertain, and that then the true good is also uncertain, since he is incapable of it. I have taken extreme pleasure in remarking in these different reasonings wherein both have reached some conformity with the true wisdom which they have essayed to understand. For if it is pleasing to observe in nature her desire to paint God in all his works, in which we see some traces of him because they are his images, how much more just is it to consider in the productions of minds the efforts which they make to imitate the essential truth, even in shunning it, and to remark wherein they attain it and wherein they wander from it, as I have endeavored to do in this study.

"It is true, sir, that you have just shown me, in an admirable manner, the little utility that Christians can draw from these philosophic studies. I shall not refrain however, with your permission, from telling you still further my thoughts on the subject, ready, however, to renounce all light that does not come from you, in which I shall have the advantage either of having encountered truth by good fortune or of receiving it from you with certainty. It appears to me that the source of the errors of these two sects, is in not having known that the state of man at the present time differs from that of his creation; so that the one, remarking some traces of his first greatness and being ignorant of his corruption, has treated nature as sound and without need of redemption, which leads him to the height of pride; whilst the other, feeling the present wretchedness and being ignorant of the original dignity, treats nature as necessarily infirm and irreparable, which precipitates it into despair of arriving at real good, and thence into extreme laxity. Thus these two states which it is necessary to know together in order to see the whole truth, being known separately, lead necessarily to one of these two vices, pride or indolence, in which all men are invariably before grace, since if they do not remain in their disorders through laxity, they forsake them through vanity, so

true is that which you have just repeated to me from St. Augustine, and which I find to a great extent; for in fact homage is rendered to them in many ways.

"It is therefore from this imperfect enlightenment that it happens that the one, knowing the duties of man and being ignorant of his impotence, is lost in presumption, and that the other, knowing the impotence and being ignorant of the duty, falls into laxity; whence it seems that since the one leads to truth, the other to error, there would be formed from their alliance a perfect system of morals. But instead of this peace, nothing but war and a general ruin would result from their union; for the one establishing certainty, the other doubt, the one the greatness of man, the other his weakness, they would destroy the truths as well as the falsehoods of each other. So that they cannot subsist alone because of their defects, nor unite because of their opposition, and thus they break and destroy each other to give place to the truth of the Gospel. This it is that harmonizes the contrarieties by a wholly divine act, and uniting all that is true and expelling all that is false, thus makes of them a truly celestial wisdom in which those opposites accord that were incompatible in human doctrines. And the reason of this is, that these philosophers of the world place contrarieties in the same subject; for the one attributed greatness to nature and the other weakness to this same nature, which could not subsist; whilst faith teaches us to place them in different subjects: all that is infirm belonging to nature, all that is powerful belonging to grace. Such is the marvellous and novel union which God alone could teach, and which he alone could make, and which is only a type and an effect of the ineffable union of two natures in the single person of a Man-God.

"I ask your pardon, sir," said M. Pascal to M. de Saci, "for being thus carried away in your presence into theology, instead of remaining in philosophy, which alone was my subject; but I was led to it insensibly; and it is difficult not to entire upon it whatever truth may be discussed, because it is the centre of all the truths; which appears here perfectly, since it so obviously includes all those that are found in these opinions. Thus I do not see how any of them could refuse to follow it. For if they are full of the idea of the greatness of man, what have they

imagined that does not yield to the promises of the Gospel, which are nothing else than the worthy price of the death of a God? And if they delighted in viewing the infirmities of nature, their ideas do not equal those of the real weakness of sin, of which the same death had been the remedy. Thus all find in it more than they have desired; and what is marvellous, they who could not harmonize in an infinitely inferior degree, then find themselves in unison!"

"M. de Saci could not refrain from testifying to M. Pascal that he was surprised to see how well he knew how to interpret things; but he acknowledged at the same time that every one had not the secret of making on these readings such wise and elevated reflections. He told him that he was like those skilful physicians, who by an adroit method of preparing the most deadly poisons knew how to extract from them the most efficacious remedies. He added, that though he saw clearly, from what he had just said, that these readings were useful to him, he could not believe however that they would be advantageous to many people of slow intellect, who would not have elevation of mind enough to read these authors and judge of them, and to know how to draw pearls from the midst of the dunghill, *aurum ex stercore,* as said one of the Fathers. This could be much better said of these philosophers, the dunghill of whom, by its black fumes, might obscure the wavering faith of those who read them. For this reason he would always counsel such persons not to expose themselves lightly to these readings, for fear of being destroyed with these philosophers, and of becoming the prey of demons and the food of worms, according to the language of the Scripture, as these philosophers have been."

"As to the utility of these readings," said M. Pascal, "I will tell you simply my thought. I find in Epictetus an incomparable art for troubling the repose of those who seek it in external things, and for forcing them to acknowledge that they are veritable slaves and miserable blind men; that it is impossible that they should find any thing else than the error and pain which they fly, unless they give themselves without reserve to God alone. Montaigne is incomparable for confounding the pride of those who, outside of faith, pique themselves in a

genuine justice; for disabusing those who cling to their opinions, and who think to find in the sciences impregnable truths; and for so effectually convicting reason of its want of light and its aberrations, that it is difficult, when one makes a good use of its principles, to be tempted to find repugnance in mysteries, for the mind is so overwhelmed by him, that it is far from wishing to judge whether the Incarnation or the mystery of the Eucharist are possible; which the generality of mankind discuss but too often.

"But if Epictetus combats indolence, he leads to pride, so that he may be very injurious to those who are not persuaded of the corruption of the most perfect justice which is not from faith. And Montaigne is absolutely pernicious to those who have any leaning to impiety or vice. For this reason these readings should be regulated with much care, discretion, and regard to the condition and disposition of those to whom they are counselled. It seems to me only that by joining them together they would not succeed ill, since the one is opposed to the evil of the other: not that they could bestow virtue but only disturb vice; the soul finding itself combated by contrarieties, the one of which expels pride and the other indolence, and being unable to be tranquil in any of these vices by their reasonings, or to shun them all."

"It was thus that these two persons of so fine an intellect agreed at last upon the subject of the reading of these philosophers, and met at the same goal, which they reached however by a somewhat different method; M. de Saci arriv-ing there at once through the clear views of Christianity, and M. Pascal reaching it only after many turns by clinging to the principles of these philosophers."

Discourse on the Passion of Love



MAN is born for thought; therefore he is not a moment without it; but the pure thoughts that would render him happy, if he could always maintain them, weary and oppress him. They make a uniform life to which he cannot adapt himself; he must have excitement and action, that is, it is necessary that he should sometimes be agitated by those passions the deep and vivid sources of which he feels within his heart.

The passions which are the best suited to man and include many others, are love and ambition: they have little connec-tion with each other; nevertheless they are often allied; but they mutually weaken, not to say destroy, each other.

Whatever compass of mind one may have, he is capable of only one great passion; hence, when love and ambition are found together, they are only half as great as they would be if only one of them existed. The time of life determines neither the beginning nor the end of these two passions; they spring up in the earliest years and subsist very often unto the tomb. Nevertheless, as they require much warmth, young persons are best fitted for them, and it seems that they abate with years: this however is very rare.

The life of man is miserably brief. It is usually computed from his first entrance into the world; for my part, I would only compute it from the birth of reason and from the time that man begins to be influenced by it, which does not ordinarily happen before twenty years of age. Before this time, we are children, and a child is not a man.

How happy is a life that begins with love and ends with ambition! If I had to choose, this is the one I should take. So long as we have ardor we are amiable; but this ardor dies out, is lost; then what a fine and noble place is left for ambition! A tumultuous life is pleasing to great minds, but those who are mediocre have no

pleasure in it; they are machines everywhere. Hence when love and ambition begin and end life, we are in the happiest condition of which human nature is capable.

The more mind we have the greater the passions are, since the passions being only sentiments and thoughts that belong purely to the mind although they are occasioned by the body, it is obvious that they are no longer any thing but the mind itself, and that thus they fill up its entire capacity. I speak here only of the ardent passions, for the others are often mingled together and cause a very annoying confusion; but this is never the case in those who have mind.

In a great soul everything is great.

It is asked whether it is necessary to love? This should not be asked, it should be felt. We do not deliberate upon it, we are forced to it, and take pleasure in deceiving ourselves when we discuss it.

Definiteness of mind causes definiteness of passion; this is why a great and definite mind loves with ardor, and sees distinctly what it loves.

There are two kinds of mind: the one geometrical, and the other what may be called the imaginative (*de finesse*).

The former is slow, rigid, and inflexible in its views, but the latter has a suppleness of thought which fastens at once upon the various pleasing qualities of what it loves. From the eyes it goes to the heart itself, and from the expression without it knows what is passing within.

When we have both kinds of mind combined, how much pleasure is given by love! For we possess at the same time the strength and the flexibility of mind essentially necessary for the eloquence of two persons.

We are born with a disposition to love in our hearts, which is developed in proportion as the mind is perfected, and impels us to love what appears to us beautiful without ever having been told what this is. Who can doubt after this whether we are in the world for anything else than to love? In fact, we conceal in vain, we always love. In the very things from which love seems to have been

separated, it is found secretly and under seal, and man could not live a moment without this.

Man does not like to dwell with himself; nevertheless he loves; it is necessary then that he seek elsewhere something to love. He can find it only in beauty; but as he is himself the most beautiful creature that God has ever formed, he must find in himself the model of this beauty which he seeks without. Every one can perceive in himself the first glimmerings of it; and according as we observe that what is without agrees or disagrees with these, we form our ideas of beauty or deformity in all things. Nevertheless, although man seeks wherewith to fill up the great void he makes in going out of himself, he cannot however be satisfied with every kind of object. His heart is too large; it is necessary at least that it should be something that resembles him and approaches him as near as may be. Hence the beauty that can satisfy man consists not only in fitness, but also in resemblance; it is restricted and confined to the difference of sex.

Nature has so well impressed this truth on our souls, that we find a predisposition to all this; neither art nor study is required; it even seems that we have a place to fill in our hearts which is thus filled effectively. But we feel this better than we can express it. It is only those who know how to confuse and contemn their ideas who do not see it.

Although this general idea of beauty may be engraven in the innermost part of our souls with ineffaceable characters, it does not prevent us from being susceptible of great differences in its individual application; but this is only in the manner of regarding what pleases us. For we do not wish for beauty alone, but desire in connection with it a thousand circumstances that depend on the disposition in which it is found, and it is in this sense that it may be said that each one possesses the original of his beauty, the copy of which he is seeking externally. Nevertheless, women often determine this original. As they have an absolute empire over the minds of men, they paint on them either the qualities of the beauties which they possess or those which they esteem, and by this means add what pleases them to this radical beauty. Hence there is one epoch for

blondes, another for brunettes, and the division there is among women in respect to esteem for the one or the other makes at the same time the difference among men in this regard.

Fashion even and country often regulate what is called beauty. It is a strange thing that custom should mingle so strongly with our passions. This does not hinder each one from having his idea of beauty by which he judges others and with which he compares them; it is on this principle that a lover finds his mistress the most beautiful and proposes her as a model.

Beauty is divided in a thousand different ways. The most proper object to sustain it is a woman. When she has intellect, she enlivens it and sets it off marvellously. If a woman wishes to please, and possesses the advantages of beauty or a portion of them at least, she will succeed; and even though men take ever so little heed of it, although she does not strive for it, she will make herself loved. There is an accessible point in their hearts; she will take up her abode there.

Man is born for pleasure; he feels it; no other proof of it is needed. He therefore follows his reason in giving himself to pleasure. But very often he feels passion in his heart without knowing in what it originated.

A true or false pleasure can equally fill the mind. For what matters it that this pleasure is false, if we are persuaded that it is true?

By force of speaking of love we become enamored. There is nothing so easy. It is the passion most natural to man.

Love has no age; it is always young. So the poets tell us; it is for this that they represent it to us under the figure of a child. But without asking any thing of it, we feel it.

Love gives intellect and is sustained by intellect. Address is needed in order to love. We daily exhaust the methods of pleasing; nevertheless it is necessary to please and we please.

We have a fountain of self-love which represents us to ourselves as being able to fill several places outside of ourselves; this is what makes us happy to be loved.

As we desire it with ardor, we quickly remark it and perceive it in the eyes of the person who loves. For the eyes are the interpreters of the heart; but he alone who is interested in them can understand their language.

Man by himself is something imperfect; he must find a second in order to be happy. He oftenest seeks it in equality of condition, because in that the liberty and the opportunity of manifesting his wishes are most easily found. Yet he sometimes rises above this, and feels the kindling flame although he dares not tell it to the one who has caused it.

When we love a woman of unequal condition, ambition may accompany the beginning of the love; but in a little time the latter becomes master. It is a tyrant that will suffer no companion; it wishes to be alone; all the other passions must bend to it and obey it.

An elevated attachment fills the heart of man much better than a common and equal one; and little things float in his capacity; none but great ones lodge and dwell therein.

We often write things which we only prove by obliging every one to reflect upon himself, and find the truth of which we are speaking. In this consists the force of the proofs of what I assert.

When a man is fastidious in any quality of his mind, he is so in love. For as he must be moved by every object that is outside of himself, if there is any thing that is repugnant to his ideas, he perceives and shuns it; the rule of this fastidiousness depends on a pure, noble, and sublime reason. Thus we can believe ourselves fastidious without actually being so, and others have the right to condemn us; whilst for beauty each one has his rule, sovereign and independent of that of others. Yet between being fastidious and not being so at all, it must be granted that when one desires to be fastidious he is not far from actually being so. Women like to perceive fastidiousness in men, and this is, it seems to me, the most vulnerable point whereby to gain them: we are pleased to see that a thousand others are contemned and that we alone are esteemed.

Qualities of mind are not acquired by habit; they are only perfected. Whence it is easy to see that fastidiousness is a gift of nature and not an acquisition of art.

In proportion as we have more intellect, we find more original beauties; but this is not necessary in order to be in love; for when love, we find but one.

Does it not seem that as often as a woman goes out of herself to impress the hearts of others, she makes a place void for others in her own? Yet, I know some who affirm that this is not true. Dare we call this injustice? It is natural to give back as much as we have taken.

Attachment to the same thought wearies and destroys the mind of man. Hence for the solidity and permanence of the pleasure of love, it is sometimes necessary not to know that we love; and this is not to be guilty of an infidelity, for we do not therefore love another; it is to regain strength in order to love the better. This happens without our thinking of it; the mind is borne hither of itself; nature wills it, commands it. It must however be confessed that this is a miserable consequence of human weakness, and that we should be happier of we were not forced to change of thought; but there is no remedy.

The pleasure of loving without daring to tell it, has its pains, but it has its joys also. What transport do we not feel in moulding all our actions in view of pleasing the person whom we infinitely esteem! We study each day to find the means of revealing ourselves, and thus employ as much time as if we were holding converse with the one whom we love. The eyes kindle and grow dim at the same moment, and although we do not see plainly that the one who causes this disorder takes heed of it, we still have the satisfaction of feeling all these emotions for a person who deserves them so well. We would gladly have a hundred tongues to make it known; for as we cannot make use of words, we are obliged to confine ourselves to the eloquence of action.

Up to this point we have constant delight and sufficient occupation. Thus we are happy; for the secret of keeping a passion constantly alive is to suffer no void to spring up in the mind, by obliging it to apply itself without ceasing to what moves it so agreeably. But when it is in the state that I have just described, it

cannot last long, because being sole actor in a passion in which there must necessarily be two, it is difficult to hinder it from soon exhausting all the emotions by which it is agitated.

Although the passion may be the same, novelty is needed; the mind takes delight in it, and he who knows how to procure it, knows how to make himself loved.

After having gone thus far, this plenitude sometimes diminishes, and receiving no assistance from the side of its source, we decline miserably, and hostile passions take possession of a heart which they rend into a thousand pieces. Yet a ray of hope, however faint it may be, exalts us as high as we were before. This is sometimes a play in which women delight; but sometimes in feigning to have compassion, they have it in reality. How happy we are when this is the case!

A firm and solid love always begins with the eloquence of action; the eyes have the best share in it. Nevertheless it is necessary to conjecture, but to conjecture rightly.

When two persons are of the same sentiments, they do not conjecture, or at least one conjectures what the other means to say without the other understanding it or daring to understand.

When we love, we appear to ourselves quite different from what we were before. Thus we imagine that every one perceives it; yet nothing is more false. But because the per-ception of reason is bounded by passion, we cannot assure ourselves and are always suspicious.

When we love, we are persuaded that we shall discover the passion of another: thus we are afraid.

The longer the way is in love, the greater is the pleasure that a sensitive mind feels in it.

There are certain minds to which hopes must long be given, and these are minds of refinement. There are others which cannot long resist difficulties, and these are the grossest. The former love longer and with more enjoyment; the latter love quicker, with more freedom, and sooner end.

The first effect of love is to inspire a profound respect; we have veneration for what we love. It is very just; we see nothing in the world so great as this.

Authors cannot tell us much of the love of their heroes; it is necessary that they should have been the heroes themselves.

Wandering in love is an monstrous as injustice in the mind.

In love, silence is of more avail than speech. It is good to be abashed; there is an eloquence in silence that penetrates more deeply than language can. How well a lover persuades his mistress when he is abashed before her, who elsewhere has so much presence of mind! Whatever vivacity we may have, it is well that in certain junctures it should be extinguished. All this takes place without rule or reflection, and when the mind acts, it is without thinking of it beforehand. This happens through necessity.

We often adore one that is unconscious of it, and do not fail to preserve an inviolable fidelity, although its object knows nothing of it. But this love must be very refined or very pure.

We know the minds of me, and consequently their passions, by the comparison that we make between ourselves and others.

I am of the opinion of him who said that in love one forgets his fortune, his relatives, and his friends; the most elevated attachments go as far as this. What causes us to go so far in love is that we do not think we have need of anything else than the object of our love: the mind is full; there is no longer any room for care or solicitude. Passion cannot exist without excess: thence it comes that we care no longer for what the world says, as we know already that our conduct ought not to be condemned, since it comes from reason. There is fulness of passion, and can be no beginning of reflection.

It is not an effect of custom, it is an obligation of nature, that men make the advances to gain the attachment of women.

This forgetfulness that is caused by love, and this attachment to the object of our love, make qualities spring up that we had not before. We become magnificent, without ever having been so.

The miser himself who loves becomes liberal, and does not remember ever to have had a contrary disposition; we see the reason of this in considering that there are some passions which contract the soul and render it stagnant, and that there are others which expand it and cause it to overflow.

We have unaptly taken away the name of reason from love and have opposed them to each other without good foundation, for love and reason are but the same thing. It is a precipitation of thought which is impelled to a side before fully examining every thing, but it is still a reason, and we should not and cannot wish that it were otherwise, for we would then be very disagreeable machines. Let us not therefore exclude reason from love, since they are inseparable. The poets were not right in painting Love blind; we must take off his bandage and restore to him henceforth the enjoyment of his eyes.

Souls fitted for love demand a life of action which becomes brilliant in new events. The external excitement must correspond with the internal, and this manner of living is a marvellous road to passion. Thence it is that courtiers are more successful in love than citizens, since the former are all fire and the latter lead a life in the uniformity of which there is nothing striking: a tempestuous life surprises, strikes, and penetrates.

It seems as though we had quite another soul when we love than when we do not love; we are exalted by this passion and become all greatness; the rest therefore must have proportion, otherwise this does not harmonize and is consequently disagreeable.

The pleasing and the beautiful are only the same thing; every one has his idea of it. It is of a moral beauty that I mean to speak, which consists in external words and actions. We have a rule indeed for becoming agreeable; yet the disposition of the body is necessary to it, but this cannot be acquired.

Men have taken pleasure in forming for themselves so elevated a standard of the pleasing that no one can attain it. Let us judge of it better, and say that this is simply nature with surprising facility and vivacity of mind. In love these two

qualities are necessary. There must be nothing of force, and yet there must be nothing of slowness: habit gives the rest.

Respect and love should be so well proportioned as to sustain each other without love being stifled by respect.

Great souls are not those that love oftenest; it is a violent love of which I speak; an inundation of passion is needed to move them and fill them. But when they begin to love, they love much more strongly.

It is said that there are some nations more amorous than others; this is not speaking rightly, or at least it is not true in every sense.

Love consisting only in an attachment of thought, it is certain that it must be the same over all the earth. It is true that, considering it otherwise than in the thought, the climate may add something, but this is only in the body.

It is with love as with good sense; as one man believes himself to have as much mind as another, he also believes that he loves the same. Yet, they who have the most perception, love even to the most trifling things, which is not possible for others. It is necessary to be very subtle to remark this difference.

One cannot feign to love unless he is very near being a lover, or at least unless he loves in some direction; for the mind and the thoughts of love are requisite for this seeming, and how shall we find means of speaking well without this? The truth of passion is not so easily disguised as serious truth.

We must have ardor, activity, and prompt and natural warmth of mind for the former; the latter we conceal by slowness and pliancy, which it is easier to do.

When we are at a distance from the object of our love, we resolve to do or to say many things; but when we are near, we are irresolute. Whence comes this? It is because when we are at a distance reason is not so much perturbed, but is strangely so in the presence of the object: now for resolution, firmness is needed, which is destroyed by perturbation.

In love we dare not hazard, because we fear to lose every thing; it is necessary, however, to advance, but who can say how far? We tremble constantly until we

have found this point. Prudence does nothing towards maintaining it when it is found.

There is nothing so embarrassing as to be a lover, and to see something in our favor without daring to believe it; we are alike opposed by hope and fear. But finally the latter becomes victorious over the other.

When we love ardently, it is always a novelty to see the person beloved. After a moment's absence, he finds a void in his heart. What happiness is it to find her again! he feels at once a cessation of anxiety.

It is necessary, however, that this love should be already far advanced; for when it is budding, and has made no progress, we feel indeed a cessation of anxiety, but others supervene.

Although troubles thus succeed each other, one is not hindered from desiring the presence of his mistress by the hope of suffering less; yet, when he sees her, he fancies that he suffers more than before. Past troubles no longer move him, the present touch him, and it is of those that touch him that he judges.

Is not a lover in this state worthy of compassion?

Preface to the Treatise on Vacuum



THE RESPECT THAT we bear to antiquity is at the present day carried to such a point on subjects in which it ought to have less weight, that oracles are made of all its thoughts and mysteries, even of its obscurities; that novelties can no longer be advanced without peril, and that the text of an author suffices to destroy the strongest reasons….

Not that it is my intention to correct one error by another, and not to esteem the ancients at all because others have esteemed them too much.

I do not pretend to banish their authority in order to exalt reasoning alone, although others have sought to establish their authority alone to the prejudice of reasoning….

To make this important distinction with care, it is necessary to consider that the former depend solely on memory and are purely historical, having nothing for their object except to know what the authors have written; the latter depend solely on reasoning and are entirely dogmatic, having for their object to seek and discover concealed truths.

Those of the former kind are limited, inasmuch as the books in which they are contained….

It is according to this distinction that we must regulate differently the extent of this respect. The respect that we should have for….

In matters in which we only seek to know what the authors have written, as in history, geography, jurisprudence, languages, and especially in theology; and in fine in all those which have for their principle either simple facts or divine or human institutions, we must necessarily have recourse to their books, since all that we can know of them is therein contained, hence it is evident that we can have full knowledge of them, and that it is not possible to add any thing thereto.

If it is in question to know who was the first king of the French; in what spot geographers place the first meridian; what words are used in a dead language, and all things of this nature; what other means than books can guide us to them? And who can add any thing new to what they teach us, since we wish only to know what they contain?

Authority alone can enlighten us on these. But the subject in which authority has the principal weight is theology, because there she is inseparable from truth, and we know it only through her: so that to give full certainty to matters incomprehensible to reason, it suffices to show them in the sacred books; as to show the uncertainty of the most probable things, it is only necessary to show that they are not included therein; since its principles are superior to nature and reason, and since, the mind of man being too weak to attain them by its own efforts, he cannot reach these lofty conceptions if he be not carried thither by an omnipotent and superhuman power.

It is not the same with subjects that fall under the senses and under reasoning; authority here is useless; it belongs to reason alone to know them. They have their separate rights: there the one has all the advantage, here the other reigns in turn. But as subjects of this kind are proportioned to the grasp of the mind, it finds full liberty to extend them; its inexhaustible fertility produces continually, and its inventions may be multiplied altogether without limit and without interruption….

It is thus that geometry, arithmetic, music, physics, medicine, architecture, and all the sciences that are subject to experiment and reasoning, should be augmented in order to become perfect. The ancients found them merely outlined by those who preceded them; and we shall leave them to those who will come after us in a more finished state than we received them.

As their perfection depends on time and pains, it is evident that although our pains and time may have acquired less than their labors separate from ours, both joined together must nevertheless have more effect than each one alone.

The clearing up of this difference should make us pity the blindness of those who bring authority alone as proof in physical matters, instead of reasoning or

experiments; and inspire us with horror for the wickedness of others who make use of reasoning alone in theology, instead of the authority of the Scripture and the Fathers. We must raise the courage of those timid people who dare invent nothing in physics, and confound the insolence of those rash persons who produce novelties in theology. Nevertheless the misfortune of the age is such, that we see many new opinions in theology, unknown to all antiquity, maintained with obstinacy and received with applause; whilst those that are produced in physics, though small in number, should, it seems, be convicted of falsehood as soon as they shock already received opinions in the slightest degree; as if the respect that we have for the ancient philosophers were a duty, and that which we bear to the most ancient of the Fathers solely a matter of courtesy! I leave it to judicious persons to remark the importance of this abuse which perverts the order of the sciences with so much injustice; and I think that there will be few who will not wish that this *liberty* might be applied to other matters, since new inventions are infallible errors in the matters which we profane with impunity; and since they are absolutely necessary for the perfection of so many other subjects incomparably lower, which nevertheless we dare not approach.

Let us divide our credulity and suspicion with more justice, and limit this respect we have for the ancients. As reason gives it birth, she ought also to measure it; and let us consider that if they had continued in this restraint of not daring to add any thing to the knowledge which they had received, or if those of their times had made the like difficulty in receiving the novelties which they offered them, they would have deprived themselves and their posterity of the fruit of their inventions.

As they only made use of that which had been bequeathed to them as a means whereby to gain more, and as this happy daring opened to them the way to great things, we should take that which they acquired in the same manner, and by their example, make of it the means and not the end of our study, and thus strive while imitating to surpass them.

For what is more unjust that to treat our ancestors with more deference than they showed to those who preceded them, and to have for them that inviolable respect which they have only merited from us because they had not the like for those who possessed the same advantage over them?…

The secrets of nature are concealed; although she is continually working, we do not always discover her effects: time reveals them from age to age, and although always alike in herself she is not always alike known.

The experiments that give us the knowledge of these secrets are multiplied continually; and as they are the sole principles of physics, the consequences are multiplied in proportion.

It is in this manner that we may at the present day adopt different sentiments and new opinions, without despising *the ancients and* without ingratitude, since the first knowledge which they have given us has served as a stepping-stone to our own, and since in these advantages we are indebted to them for our ascendency over them; because being raised by their aid to a certain degree, the slightest effort causes us to mount still higher, and with less pains and less glory we fined ourselves above them. Thence it is that we are enabled to discover things which it was impossible for them to perceive. Our view is more extended, and although they knew as well as we all that they could observe in nature, they did not, nevertheless, know it so well, and we see more than they.

Yet it is marvellous in what manner their sentiments are revered. It is made a crime to contradict them and an act of treason to add to them, as though they had left no more truths to be known.

Is not this to treat unworthily the reason of man and to put it on a level with the instinct of animals, since we take away the principal difference between them, which is that the effects of reason accumulate without ceasing, whilst instinct remains always in the same state? The cells of the bees were as correctly measured a thousand years ago as to-day, and each formed a hexagon as exactly the first time as the last. It is the same with all that the animals produce by this occult impulse. Nature instructs them in proportion as necessity impels them; but

this fragile science is lost with the wants which give it birth: as they received it without study, they have not the happiness of preserving it; and every time it is given them it is new to them, since the … nature having for her object nothing but the maintenance of animals in a limited order of perfection, she inspires them with this necessary science … always the same, lest they may fall into decay, and does not permit them to add to it, lest they should exceed the limits that she has prescribed to them. It is not the same with man, who is formed only for infinity. He is ignorant at the earliest age of his life; but he is instructed unceasingly in his progress; for he derives advantage, not only from his own experience, but also from that of his predecessors; since he always retains in his memory the knowledge which he himself has once acquired, and since he has that of the ancients ever present in the books which they have bequeathed to him. And as he preserves this knowledge, he can also add to it easily; so that men are at the present day in some sort in the same condition in which those ancient philosophers would have been found, could they have survived till the present time, adding to the knowledge which they possessed that which their studies would have acquired by the aid of so many centuries. Thence it is that by an especial prerogative, not only does each man advance from day to day in the sciences, but all mankind together make continual progress in proportion as the world grows older, since the same thing happens in the succession of men as in the different ages of single individuals. So that the whole succession of men, during the course of many ages, should be considered as a single man who subsists forever and learns continually, whence we see with what injustice we respect antiquity in philosophers; for as old age is that period of life most remote from infancy, who does not see that old age in this universal man ought not to be sought in the times nearest his birth, but in those the most remote from it? Those whom we call ancient were really new in all things, and properly constituted the infancy of mankind; and as we have joined to their knowledge the experience of the centuries which have followed them, it is in ourselves that we should find this antiquity that we revere in others.

They should be admired for the results which they derived from the very few principles they possessed, and they should be excused for those in which they failed rather from the lack of the advantage of experience than the strength of reasoning.

For were they not excusable in the idea that they enter-tained of the *milky way,* when, the weakness of their vision not having yet received the assistance of art, they attributed this color to a greater density in that part of the heavens which reflected the light more strongly? But would we not be inexcusable for remaining in the same opinion, now that, by the aid of the advantages procured us by the telescope, we have discovered in it an infinite number of small stars, whose more abundant splendor has revealed to us the true cause of this whiteness!

Had they not also cause for saying that all corruptible bodies were inclosed within the orbit of the moon, when, during the course of so many ages they had not yet remarked either corruption or generation outside of this space?

But ought we not to be assured of the contrary, when the whole world has manifestly beheld comets kindle and disappear far beyond the limits of that sphere?

In the same way, in respect to vacuum, they had a right to say that nature would not suffer it, since all their experiments had always made them remark that she abhorred, and could not suffer it.

But if the modern experiments had been known to them, perhaps they would have found cause for affirming what they found cause for denying, for the reason that vacuum had not yet appeared. Thus, in the judgment they formed that nature would not suffer vacuum, they only heard nature spoken of in the condition in which they knew her; since, to speak in general terms, it would not have been sufficient to have seen it constantly in a hundred cases, a thousand, or any other number, however great it may have been; since, if a single case remained unexamined, this alone would suffice to prevent the general definition, and if a single one was contrary, this alone…. For in all matters the proof of which consists in experiments, and not in demonstrations, we can make no universal

assertion, except by the general enumeration of all the parts and all the different cases. Thus it is that when we say that the diamond is the hardest of all bodies, we mean of all the bodies with which we are acquainted, and we neither can nor ought to comprehend in this assertion those with which we are not acquainted; and when we say that gold is the heaviest of all bodies, we should be presumptuous to comprehend in this general proposition those which have not yet come to our knowledge, although it is not impossible that they may exist in nature.

In the same manner, when the ancients affirmed that nature would not suffer a vacuum, they meant that she would not suffer it in any of the experiments they had seen, and they could not, without temerity, comprehend in it those which had not come to their knowledge. Had they done so, they would doubtless have drawn from them the same conclusions, and would, by their acknowledgment, have sanctioned them by this antiquity which it is sought at present make the sole principle of the sciences.

Thus it is that, without contradicting them, we can affirm the contrary of what they say; and, whatever authority, in fine, this antiquity may have, truth should always have more, although newly discovered, since she is always older than all the opinions that we have had of her, and it would be showing ourselves ignorant of her nature to imagine that she may have begun to be at the time when she began to be known.

New Fragment of the Treatise on Vacuum



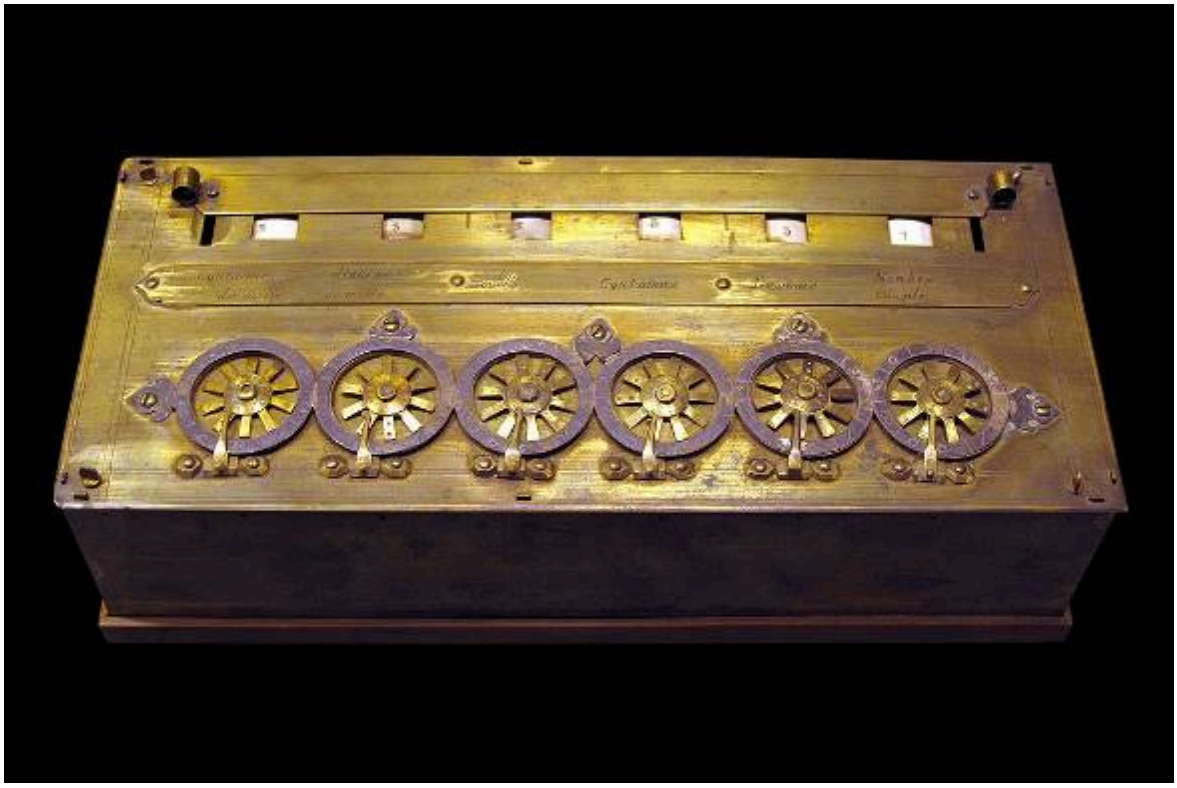
WHAT IS THERE more absurd than to say that inanimate bodies have passions, fears, horrors; that insensible bodies, without life, and even incapable of it, may have passions which presuppose a soul at least sensitive to experience them? Besides, if the object of this horror were a vacuum, what is there in a vacuum that could make them afraid? What is there meaner and more ridiculous?

This is not all; if they have in themselves a principle of motion to shun a vacuum, have they arms, legs, muscles, nerves?

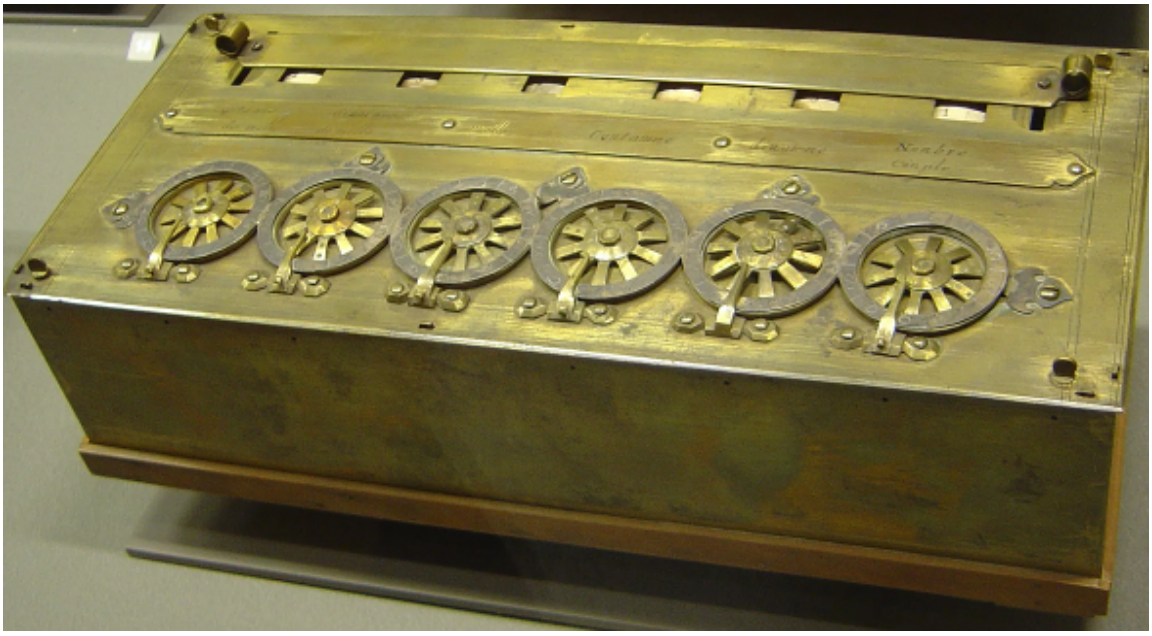
The Criticism



Rouen, France — Pascal was a child prodigy and educated by his father, Étienne Pascal (1588–1651). A local judge and member of the "Noblesse de Robe", Étienne had an interest in science and mathematics. In 1639 Étienne was appointed the king's commissioner of taxes in the city of Rouen — a city whose tax records, due to recent uprisings, were in utter chaos.



An early Pascaline, Musée des Arts et Métiers, Paris — in 1642, in an effort to ease his father's endless calculations of taxes owed and paid , Pascal, not yet 19 years old, constructed a mechanical calculator capable of addition and subtraction, called Pascal's calculator or the 'Pascaline' — the first commercially distributed calculating machine.



The Pascaline could add, subtract, multiply and divide, and was good enough to be used in his father's tax office; Louis XIV gave Pascal a royal "privilege" entitling him to make and sell the machine anywhere in France. In 1970 an imperative and procedural programming language, designed by Niklaus Wirth as a small, efficient language intended to encourage good programming practices was named in honour of Pascal.

The Biographies



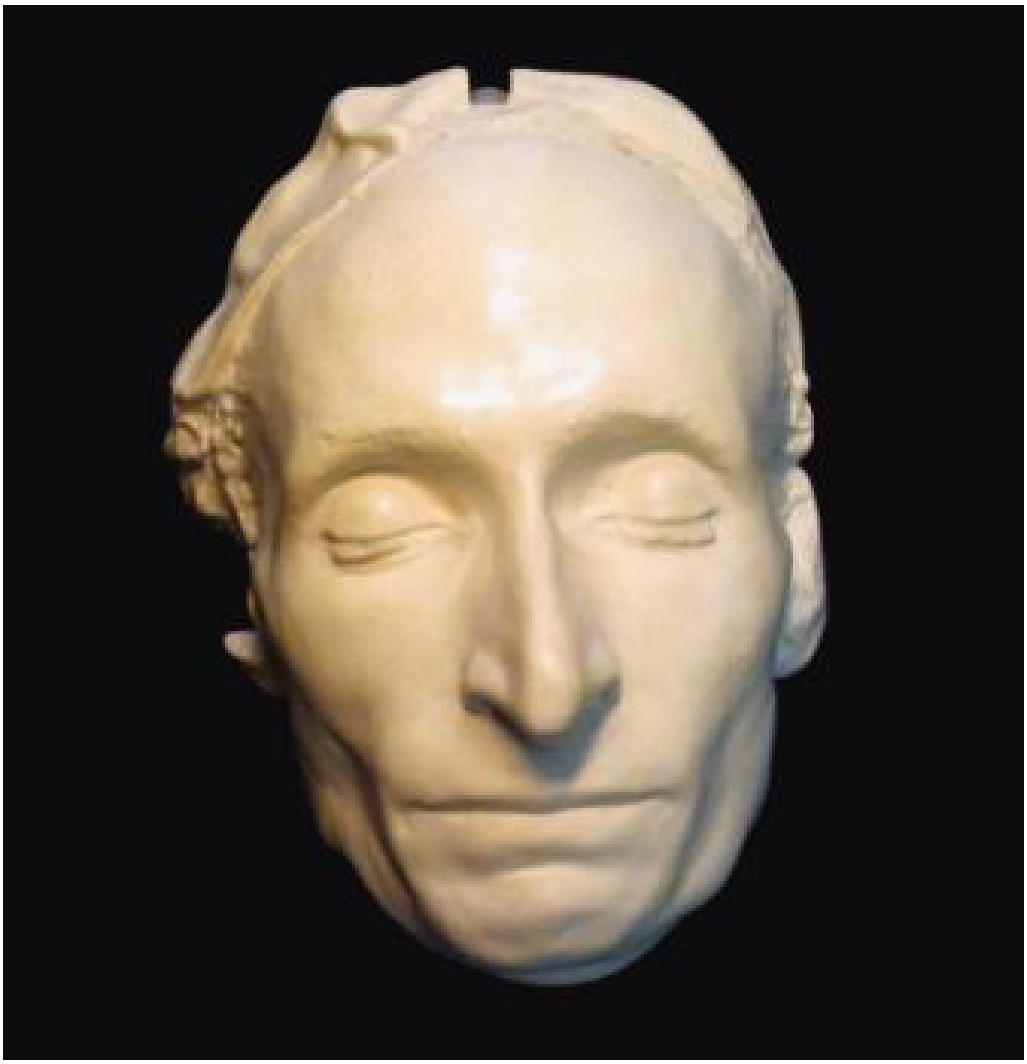
Plaque at No. 54 rue Monsieur-le-Prince (formerly rue des Francs-Bourgeois-Saint-Michel), Paris, where Pascal lived from 1654 until his death in 1662.



The plaque commemorating his residence at rue des Francs-Bourgeois-Saint-Michel



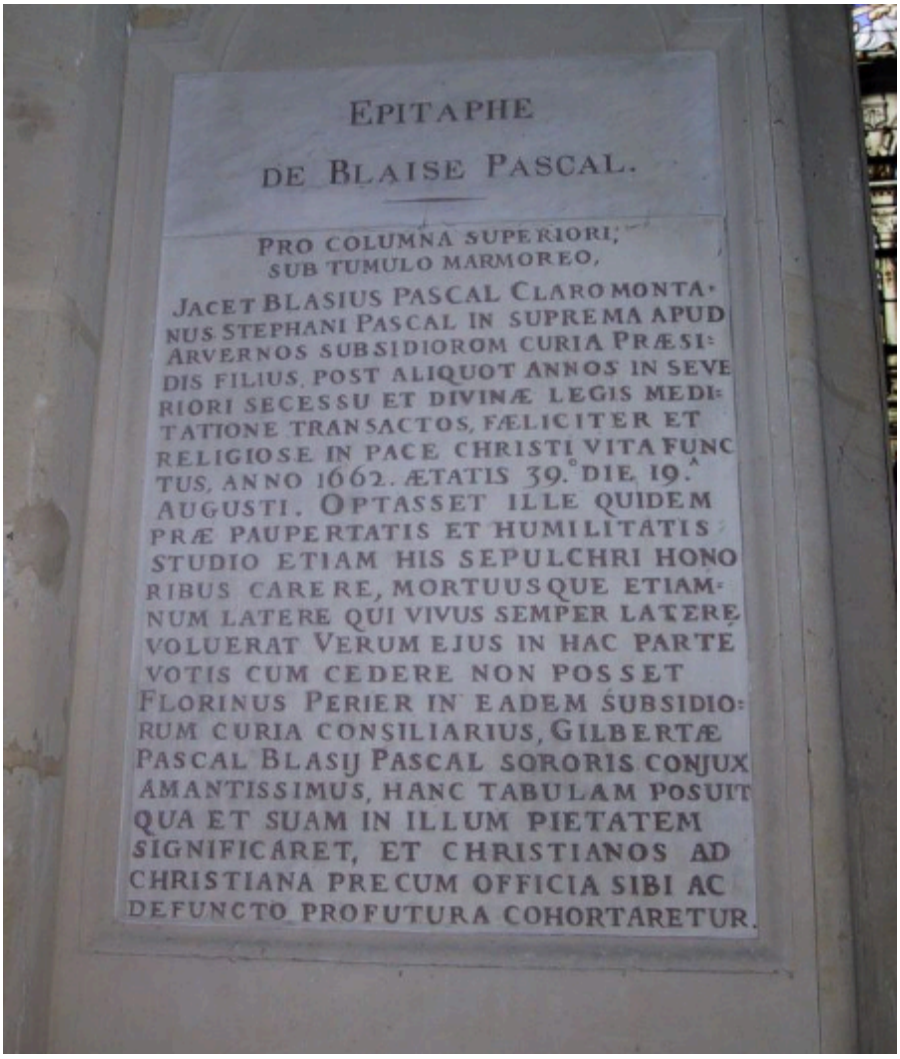
A seventeenth century portrait of Pascal by an unknown artist



Pascal's death mask



Saint-Étienne-du-Mont, a church in Paris on the Montagne Sainte-Geneviève in the 5th arrondissement, near the Panthéon — Pascal's final resting place


EPITAPHE
DE BLAISE PASCAL.
PRO COLUMNA SUPERIORI,
SUB TUMULO MARMOREO,
JACET BLASIUS PASCAL CLAROMONTA-
NUS STEPHANI PASCAL IN SUPREMA APUD
ARVERNOS SUBSIDIORUM CURIA PRÆSI-
DIS FILIUS, POST ALIQUOT ANNOS IN SEVE
RIORI SECESSU ET DIVINÆ LEGIS MEDI-
TATIONE TRANSACTOS, FÆLICITER ET
RELIGIOSE IN PACE CHRISTI VITA FUNC
TUS, ANNO 1662. ÆTATIS 39.° DIE 19.ª
AUGUSTI. OPTASSET ILLE QUIDEM
PRÆ PAUPERTATIS ET HUMILITATIS
STUDIO ETIAM HIS SEPULCHRI HONO
RIBUS CARERE, MORTUUSQUE ETIAM-
NUM LATERE QUI VIVUS SEMPER LATERE
VOLUERAT VERUM EJUS IN HAC PARTE
VOTIS CUM CEDERE NON POSSET
FLORINUS PERIER IN EADEM SUBSIDIO-
RUM CURIA CONSILIARIUS, GILBERTÆ
PASCAL BLASII PASCAL SORORIS CONJUX
AMANTISSIMUS, HANC TABULAM POSUIT
QUA ET SUAM IN ILLUM PIETATEM
SIGNIFICARET, ET CHRISTIANOS AD
CHRISTIANA PRECUM OFFICIA SIBI AC
DEFUNCTO PROFUTURA COHORTARETUR.

The epitaph to Pascal, close to his grave